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Memories  
of Seventy Years



*Edited by*  
*Mrs. Herbert Martin*

# FIELD FAMILY FUND

*FOR HISTORY  
AND THE HUMANITIES*



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MEMORIES OF SEVENTY YEARS.



*The Literary World*

MEMORIES  
OF  
SEVENTY YEARS

*BY ONE OF A LITERARY FAMILY*

*[A. C. C. C. C. C.]*

EDITED BY

MRS HERBERT MARTIN



GRIFFITH & FARRAN

(SUCCESSORS TO NEWBERRY AND HARRIS)

WEST CORNER ST PAUL'S CHURCHYARD, LONDON

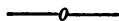
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## P R E F A C E.



THE author of these scattered reminiscences, more of people than of events, does not lay any claim to literary ability or talent. She is anxious to plead great diffidence in sending out the gathered memories of by-gone times, and has been with difficulty persuaded, perhaps by too partial friends, that what she has written for her own family in the leisure of old age may find in the wider circle of the reading public a welcome amongst the few who are interested in old fashioned times and people.


At any rate, she has this claim, that she has lived amongst and belonged to those whom the world has not yet forgotten, and whose names are still held in honour. A grand-daughter of the author of "Evenings of Home,"—for the better known partner in this work, Dr Aikin's sister, Mrs Barbauld, only contributed a small number of articles to this still famous little book,—a grand-daughter also of the great scholar and good, if eccentric, man, Gilbert Wakefield, a great-niece of Mrs Barbauld, my mother had every opportunity of entering the charmed circle of literary people, in those days a much smaller one than now. Our modern swarm of lady writers, scientific and philosophical, novelists and poets, may perhaps be inclined

to scoff at the celebrity which the select few of their sex who entered the ranks of authorship attained. But possibly their fame was better deserved than those who scorn them may imagine. It needed real courage and industry in the days of our great-grand parents for a woman to brave the accusation of "blue-stocking," and to collect materials for any lasting work. Perhaps a little talent went further in those days than it does now, but time, which is the only test, has decreed that at least one of my ancestors' names shall survive even to these intellectual nineteenth century days of woman's cultivation. Mrs Barbauld's genius, if modest, was undeniable. A poem that Wordsworth has coveted may be admitted to live, and her works for children in this day of multitudinous children's books have an enduring and delicate charm, especially the "Hymns in Prose." Much of her writing is obsolete, but the stanzas on "Life," and a few other well-known works of hers, have the enduring touch of genius.

It is not only, however, on account of the ability of these ancestors of my mother's that she has always felt a quiet pride in them, and that she desires to keep their memories green. In troubled, bigoted, and often cruel times, these people were Liberals of Liberals, and advocates of Civil and Religious Liberty when such views involved social ostracism, pains, and penalties, which nowadays have disappeared, though Bigotry and Intolerance are by no means dead or dying.

They faced these consequences of the stern regard for truth and integrity which was part of their lives with courageous cheerfulness. An almost Spartan simplicity and temperance, an austere morality, and, with all the Puritanic reserve of their habits, a warm affection and great benevolence towards their fellow-creatures, made this small circle of highly educated literary people a remarkable and admirable one.

My mother has wished to include in these reminiscences a sketch of Gilbert Wakefield, which appeared a few years since in the *Modern Review*. Beyond this my share in the present work is very small. The only literary members of the family of whom I have any personal recollection are my great-aunt, Lucy Aikin, who died in my father's house in 1864, and her brother Arthur. Of this kind old uncle I have many childish memories, every one pleasant. I can recall his gentle, smiling face, the venerable white head always covered with a black velvet cap, his gifts of half-crowns slyly slipped into small hands, the taste of his toast and hung beef at breakfast time, his playful nickname of "Shrimp" addressed to me. Of his learning and scientific acquirements of course I was too young to judge, and he was the quietest and most modest of men; a complete contrast to his sister, our Aunt Lucy, who by no means hid her light under a bushel. Her lively, sparkling, versatile talents were essentially social ones; she had mind enough to be quite happy through long solitary hours, with no other company but her beloved books, reading Latin



with the zest with which a modern girl devours a novel, but in society she shone and loved to take the lead. I have never met any one in the least like her, the race of conversationists of her stamp seeming extinct; and I have a vivid recollection of her, for hers was a marked personality. I owe her my introduction to the Latin Grammar, to Addison, Steele, Pope, Dryden, Milton, Spenser, and many another giant of the past. When quite children she read to me and my sisters, as if we had the power of appreciating them, the "Paradise Lost" and the "Faerie Queene," for light literature articles from the *Spectator* and *Tatler*. I am afraid I was often guilty of frivolity, and if I did not yawn over Milton, sometimes giggled in inappropriate moments; but on the whole I enjoyed the reading even then, and am very grateful for it now. Her animation and interest could not fail to be infectious, and her lively and brilliant conversation will never be forgotten by us. She was a very kind and benevolent aunt to us in many other ways, and is a link in my mind with the former days, which my mother has endeavoured to recall for us in the following pages.

She desires to acknowledge the kindness of the Rev. Thomas Sadler in permitting her to make numerous extracts from his interesting "Diary of Henry Crabbe Robinson," and for his valuable advice and help, and appeals to her readers and critics to be indulgent to the effort which it has cost her much to make, but which she gives them in the hope that they may find some pleasure in the gleanings of seventy years.

# CONTENTS.

---

## CHAPTER I.

	PAGE
Arthur Aikin—Charles Rochemont Aikin—Dr John Aikin—Harlington Estate—Highwaymen—Wingate Family—Rev. John Jennings—Dr Doddridge . . . . .	i

## CHAPTER II.

Old house in Broad Street—Stock Newington—Dr Aikin—Test Acts—Extracts from letters . . . . .	13
--	----

## CHAPTER III.

Mrs Barbauld's mother—Dr Doddridge's love letter—Works of Dr Aikin—Letter from Mr Roscoe of Liverpool . . . . .	26
---	----

## CHAPTER IV.

Lucy Aikin—Mrs Aikin—Mrs Kinder—Edmund Aikin—Thomas Campbell—Stoke Newington—Mrs Barbauld . . . . .	35
---	----

## CHAPTER V.

Mr H. C. Robinson—Dr Priestley—Mr Howard—Josiah Wedgewood . . . . .	51
---	----

## CHAPTER VI.

Hampstead—Joanna Baillie—Destruction of the Bastille—Lord Daer—Dr Johnson—Remove to Newington—Sir Walter Scott . . . . .	63
--	----

## CHAPTER VII.

Norwich—William Taylor—Taylor Family—Martineau Family—Mrs Opie—Charles Lamb—Southey—Coleridge—Wordsworth—Funeral of Lord Nelson—Goodwin—Mrs Shelley . . . . .	71
---	----

## CHAPTER VIII.

James Montgomery . . . . .	82
----------------------------	----

## CHAPTER IX.

Waterloo—Allied sovereigns' visit to London—Princess Charlotte—William IV. at the Tower in state—Society of Arts—Duke of Sussex . . . . .	PAGE 88
---	------------

## CHAPTER X.

Edgeworth Family—Friendship with Mrs Barbauld—Letter from Miss Edgeworth—Frank Edgeworth—Miss Edgeworth's Novels—George Dyer—Mrs Gilbert Wakefield and George Dyer . . . . .	95
--	----

## CHAPTER XI.

Death of Mrs Barbauld . . . . .	103
---------------------------------	-----

## CHAPTER XII.

Miss Aikin's Poems—Rochemont Barbauld—At Palgrave in Suffolk—Success of the School . . . . .	114
--	-----

## CHAPTER XIII.

Removes to Hampstead—Mrs Barbauld's Death . . . . .	127
---	-----

## CHAPTER XIV.

Mrs Chas. Aikin—Sharpe Family—Rogers Family—Miss Benger . . . . .	135
---	-----

## CHAPTER XV.

Lord Denman—Bedford College—Mrs Jameson—Mr Kenyon—Irving—Flaxman—Stothard—La Caille—Callcot—Smirke, R.A.—Actors—Fanny Kemble . . . . .	148
--	-----

## CHAPTER XVI.

Old Hampstead—The Longmans—Crabbe—Harriet Martineau—Malthus—Literary Americans—Professor Smyth—Joanna Baillie . . . . .	156
---	-----

## CHAPTER XVII.

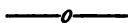
Sydney Smith—Rajah Ram Mohun Roy . . . . .	169
--	-----

CONCLUSION . . . . .	173
----------------------	-----

---

GILBERT WAKEFIELD . . . . .	175
-----------------------------	-----

# MEMORIES OF SEVENTY YEARS.



## CHAPTER I.

Arthur Aikin—Charles Rochemont Aikin—Dr John Aikin—Harlington Estate—  
Highwaymen—Wingate Family—Rev. John Jennings—Dr Doddridge.

SEVERAL years ago, when spending the summer in a little cottage we rented at Lyme, a young friend who was visiting us procured from the library of the town a volume of Madame D'Arblay's Diary, in which were mention of things and persons long passed away, about which she applied to me for explanation. I was led on by her questions to speak of various old-fashioned subjects, and on her saying that she thought it a pity I did not write down some of my early recollections, it struck me that though I have not inherited any of my ancestors' literary talents, I might leave a few little notes which might interest those who survive me.

I think my childhood was peculiar, at least I never see children now brought up as we were, having neither nursery nor school-room, but living entirely with our parents, and my father's elder brother, my dear uncle Arthur, whose home was with us till I was about nine years old, when he was chosen secretary of the Society of Arts, and went to live in the house in the Adelphi. He was a man of vast learning, a

Arthur  
Aikin.

pure and noble character, simple tastes, and perfect temper. Through his long life he was a second father to us, never having married. He retained his appointment for twenty years, when he returned to live with my father, then a widower; and after his death, ended his own days with my sister and her husband. He published, in conjunction with my father, "The Chemical Dictionary," a work which established the reputation of the authors, and went through many editions, though now in a great measure superseded by more modern works. He was Chemical Lecturer at Guy's Hospital for the long period of thirty years, and one of the founders of the Geological Society, to which he was also secretary for some years. A scientific paper wrote on his death :—

"We may say of all the works which issued from his pen that whatever he published bore the stamp of accuracy and truthfulness. Independently of his knowledge of chemistry, Mr Aikin was well versed in botany. He was also a good classical scholar. A man of studious habits, his time was spent in self-instruction, or in the cultivation of some useful pursuit. In private life he was esteemed by all who knew him. He was a man of even temper and amiable disposition, equally ready to receive and impart knowledge; and we believe we may truly say that in spite of the collisions which occasionally occur among men of science, he never made an enemy."

Charles  
Roche-  
mont  
Aikin.

Between my uncle's and my mother's fond indulgence we three little girls would have been sadly spoilt, had it not been for my father's sense and



energy. He also gave us daily lessons in arithmetic and French, which he read and spoke like a native, owing to having been brought up by his French uncle, Mr Barbauld. I fear that in our early days he was less loved by us than our mother and uncle ; but as time went on, and the sad day came when he was to be our only parent, and still more when I was myself a mother, I learnt to appreciate his beautiful character, his utter unselfishness, his deep tenderness and sensibility.

I feel that I ought to have made a better use of the atmosphere of science and literature by which I was surrounded in my childhood ; but I had neither the talents nor the industry of either of my sisters, besides which I had very delicate health, owing, as I knew afterwards, to having been brought up in a close part of London, in an undrained house. No one thought or knew anything about sanitary matters then ; it was long after that I discovered that the deaths of my mother and second sister a few years later on had been from this cause.

As to the rest of my father's family then living at Stoke Newington, I certainly never saw any persons like my elder relations.

Pure in their lives, of perfect integrity, free from envy as worldly ambition, affectionate in their family relations, they were satisfied to live in the most Spartan simplicity, truly

“Content with science in a humble cell,  
though without any coarseness, as their habits were  
refined as their manners.

They were all tenderly fond of children, though requiring obedience and respect from them, very unlike the free and easy manners of modern life.

Dr John  
Aikin.

In the year 1792 my grandfather, Dr Aikin, came to settle in London as a physician; he was advised to choose the City, as he had many valuable and wealthy friends living there. The fine old houses, now, I believe, all turned into offices or warehouses, were then inhabited by merchants, bankers, and professional men. There were not also many other places to live in. Belgravia was a marsh by the river. Bayswater, Regent's Park, and everything north of Bloomsbury Square, were fields. Lord Macaulay, in his "History of James II.," says: "Southampton Square, which is now called Bloomsbury Square, and King's Square, in Soho Fields, which is now Soho Square, were among the favourite spots. Foreign princes were carried to see Bloomsbury Square as one of the wonders of England."

The houses and grounds of the Dukes of Bedford and Montague were on the north side of Bloomsbury Square; the latter house was taken by the Government for the British Museum. I have often been over it. The Lord Chancellor's house, burnt down in the riots of 1780, was on the east side of the square.

In this then fashionable quarter my grandmother's father, Mr Jennings, had his town house. The family lived in it from November to May, then the London season, when they returned to their old house at

Harlington, in Bedfordshire, taking two days for the <sup>Harling-</sup> journey of forty miles. <sup>ton Estate.</sup>

This secluded village is now a railway station, with a daily post to London, instead of once a week as in the old times.

The estate was last possessed by my grandmother's niece, Elizabeth Jennings, and after her own and her husband's death was sold, to the great sorrow of all the family. I am glad to have seen it several times in my life.

Harlington was only a few miles from the great <sup>Highway-</sup> Dunstable Downs, a dreary tract much infested by <sup>men.</sup> highwaymen. One morning Mr Jennings's stable door was found open, and a fine horse of his was standing, trembling violently, covered with dust and heat, evidently having been ridden all night; his being returned at all was probably owing to Mr Jennings's great popularity in the county. The annual journey to town was an affair of peril and anxiety. On one occasion, travelling without any gentlemen, they observed a man on horseback following them for some miles, always keeping the same distance, and stopping when they did.

At last Mrs Jennings, whose temper was imperious, could bear it no longer. She put her head out of the window, and shouted to the man, "If you want to rob us, *do!*"

"Lord love you, Madam Jennings," said a well known voice, "I don't want to rob you; I was only keeping up with the carriage for safety."

My aunt, Lucy Aikin, in a little book written for my children, gives the following account of the old estate :—

Wingate  
Family.

“ The old family house, on the most antique end of which my uncle remembered a plate bearing the date 1396, was the seat of a family, Norman, I suppose, of the name of Belverge, bearing on their shield three pears *or* (bel v ger), till it was conveyed, by the marriage of an heiress at the end of the fourteenth century, to a Wingate of the neighbouring village of Sharpen-thoe. Wingate of Harlington is included in the list of gentry made by the heralds on their visitation held in the reign and under the auspices of Henry VI., which intimates him to have belonged to the Lancastrian party. The master of the Grange was never lord of the manor, yet his estates appear to have been considerable. Edward Wingate held the office of ‘ Master of the Bears ’ to Queen Elizabeth (another of the family, Edmund, was the author of a work on arithmetic, which became famous, and is now very scarce).

“ Sir Francis Wingate, owner of the estate in the time of Charles II., aspired to the hand of Lady Anne, daughter of Sir Arthur Annesley, first Earl of Anglesea ; his letter of declaration was strangely preserved in the family. He values his estate at about £1000 per annum, and promises to keep a coach and six. The earl, her father, gave her several thousand pounds. Bishop Burnet writes of this noble lord that he sold himself so often that at length no

party thought him worth buying. He seems to have feathered his nest pretty well, but was certainly an able man. Grand were the preparations made at poor Harlington for the reception of the noble bride. The hall, and the state bedchamber over it, were fitted up. The chamber was hung with tapestry, 'disfiguring and representing' the judgment of Paris and other classical stories; the bed was of crimson damask, richly adorned with fringe and gilding; there was a handsome Japan cabinet, heavy armchairs and toilet ornaments to match, and a dressing-room within,—splendours which excited my awe and veneration in my youthful days, decayed and faded as they were. But as for Lady Anne, tradition says she sat her down and cried when she saw to how poor a place she had been brought as her home. Her husband looks in his portrait very good-natured, but heavy enough. The Lady Anne—let us hope she was of a sweeter temper than she looks in hers. She was a stiff Presbyterian, her husband a jolly Episcopalian, who said somewhat bitterly that when he was gone she would turn his great hall into a Conventicle. Perhaps this thought had set an edge on his zeal, when in the character of a Justice of the Quorum he committed John Bunyan to Bedford jail for unlicensed preaching.

"But that an old family mansion must absolutely have a ghost, in fact it would be almost as disgraceful to the race to be without one as to want a coat of arms, I would not be so undutiful as to tell the tale

but it is a matter of necessity, so here it is. The Lady Anne had a friend, who, unknown to her husband, had made up a purse, the contents of which she destined to be shared among her children by a former marriage. On her deathbed she entrusted to her this deposit. Lady Anne, I dare not say with what thoughts,—she being then a widow and hard pressed enough,—*delayed* to deliver over the money. One night she was startled by a mysterious rustling in a certain long, dark, crooked passage into which her chamber opened, the rustling—yes, she could not be mistaken—of a silk gown, the very gown of her departed friend. It passed on to a certain narrow door, at which *something* seemed to enter, and the rustling ceased. Her ladyship paid the money next day, and nothing more was ever heard or seen, but some people had an odd feeling as they passed that door, leading only to the china closet, even within my memory.

■ “A more favourable trait of Lady Anne has been preserved. She possessed two beautiful miniatures, evidently a pair. One represented her nephew, Lord Altham, the other a lady so lovely in feature, and still more in expression, one was never weary of gazing upon it. Lady Anne was accustomed often to take it out of her cabinet and weep tenderly over it; so far her daughters could attest, but she never would inform them whom it represented or what had been her story. Lord Altham, worthy to shine among the courtiers of Charles II., had three wives living at the same time. The first of these deceived and unhappy ladies was

probably his aunt's friend; yes, it must have been her wrongs over which she shed these frequent tears, and shame at her nephew's treachery and wickedness doubtless tied her tongue."

The son of Lord Altham who succeeded to his father's title of Earl of Anglesea was the unhappy James Annesley, whose strange adventures and cruel fate formed the subject of a novel and also a play called "The Lost Heir." Long litigation naturally followed, which ended in the extinction of the title of Earl of Anglesea, but the family were allowed to retain their Irish title of Viscount Valentia. When many years ago my son was on duty at the Cape, he met with a young Annesley serving with his regiment, who claimed kinship with him. Three brothers of the name were killed in the Crimean War.

"Sir Francis died in middle age, leaving his lady with three sons and six ill-portioned daughters. The sons all possessed the estate in succession, the two eldest dying single. The first dissipated more than his prudent brother was able to retrieve. The third, John, a retired naval captain, just managed to make both ends meet. Hewas long a widower, and as he had no surviving child, it was matter of anxious speculation which nephew he would make his heir. Charles Moor, eldest nephew, chose to regard it as his right, and prepared himself for the few ancestral acres by such a career of idleness, extravagance, and folly, as determined his uncle never to put them at his mercy. For the very opposite qualities he at length declared it to be his intention

to leave the old place to my grandfather, Arthur Jennings . . . By way of retaliation, I suppose for his persecution of Bunyan, two of the daughters of Sir Francis were doomed to marry dissenting ministers, not in his lifetime, however. One was a Mrs Norris, the other Anna Letitia, my great grandmother. One died single, Aunt Rachel, of whom all I know is that she had the honour to have Rachel Lady Russell for her godmother, she being cousin to her mother."

Rev. John  
Jennings.

Anna Letitia Wingate married the son of John Jennings, a clergyman in what was then called Powisland, a part of Wales. He was one of the noble two thousand who resigned their livings rather than violate consciences by signing the Church articles at the prompting of Lord Clarendon. The loss was the heavier to Mr Jennings from his cure being his own advowson. Some chance took him to Kibworth, where he founded the academy afterwards carried on by his son. This son was a very industrious teacher and man of letters; he became the dissenting minister of Kibworth, and died of the small-pox in middle life. His widow was left rather young and slenderly provided, with four children, Arthur, John, Francis, and Jane. She continued for some years to reside at Kibworth, and Dr Doddridge, her husband's successor, as head of the academy, was her boarder. Her children were indebted to him for much early instruction, which contributed, with their advantages of birth and connections, to raise them above the level of their narrow fortune.

Dr Dod-  
dridge.



The daughter was presented at Court by some Annesley relation. She was lively, not without beauty, and had a natural talent for singing. The result was that her honoured tutor, Dr Doddridge, was moved to indite an elaborate epistle, still in my possession, in which he laboured to convince her "that it was actually possible for a grave divine of thirty years of age to experience the passion of love for a little gentlewoman of fifteen." The converse of the problem he seems to have taken for granted. Not so the young lady, who stedfastly refused to become the Eloisa of such an Abelard. They always remained the best of friends, however, and she became the happy wife of John Aikin, D.D., and the mother of the second Dr Aikin and of Mrs Barbauld.

Of her brothers, Francis became a brewer at Bedford. He was accounted but a black sheep among the followers of John Bunyan, who were used to sit behind closed window shutters on the Sabbath. Two ancient ladies of the congregation, who held it a duty to keep godly watch over the doings of the brethren, went to remonstrate with uncle Frank on two sinful compliances with the world. He had set up a pair of red slippers, and his wife—she was young and very pretty—wore her hair in ringlets on the neck. Alas, he actually *pooh-pooed* the slippers, and as to his wife's ringlets, he declared he liked them, and wear them she should.

His brother John, destined for a dissenting minister, was the wit of Doddridge's Academy, and the

darling of his relations and friends. A diary of Mr Merivale, his fellow student, records many of the smart sayings and merry stories of "Jack." Soon after he had finished his education he went to live in a kind of chaplain capacity with Mr Coward, a wealthy merchant. A chaplain this zealous Puritan appears not greatly to have needed, since he took upon himself the performance of the family devotions. On these occasions he would be carried out in prayer to very extraordinary lengths indeed. According to the accounts of "Uncle Jack," faithfully preserved by his contemporaries, he had once insured for a considerable sum a ship called the *Mingen* which was lost. Accounting himself ill-treated by the Deity on the occasion, he thus remonstrated, "But, O Lord, Thou *nickedst* me in the *Mingen*!"

## CHAPTER II.

Old house in Broad Street—Stock Newington—Dr Aikin—Test Acts—Extracts from letters.

I RETURN to the old house in Broad Street, where the descendants of the old people of the foregoing pages lived. Old house  
in Broad  
Street.

Dr Aikin, after a few years' trial of London life, in which he seemed to have a fair chance of success in his profession, was seized with an attack of paralysis,\* and thinking his career had come to an end, at once gave up his house and practice to my father, then entering life; and after a year spent at Dorking, finally took a house at Stoke Newington, then a pleasant rural village, where he recovered his health and lived twenty years longer. He practised a little in the place as consulting physician, and set aside an hour or two every morning for gratuitous advice to his poor neighbours, devoting most of the rest of his time to literature.

In consequence of this family arrangement the whole of my early life was spent in the city of London—a dreary place for little children. Oh, how I used to long to live among fields and gardens! If it

\* "After Dr Aikin had suffered his first attack of paralysis, he said, 'I must make the most of the *salvage of life*.'"—*Mr Robinson's Diary*.

had not been for frequent visits to our relations at Newington and Hackney, where lived my grandmother Wakefield and an old uncle, in a pleasant house, I do not think we could have been reared ; as it was my mother and ourselves were perpetually ill with headaches and slight fever. The only grass we ever trod was in the garden of Finsbury Square, into which we were admitted by friends living there. One of these was Baron Dimsdale, who had been sent by the College of Surgeons to inoculate Catharine II., and had been ennobled by her. Another inhabitant of the square was Mr Nicholson, son-in-law of Mr William Smith, M.P. for Norwich, who, in conjunction with Mr Wilberforce, brought about the abolition of slavery. Mr Smith was a warm and constant friend of my Aunt Barbould. We have had some acquaintance with his large family always. Miss Nightingale and Lady Verney are his grand-daughters. Dr and Mrs Yelloly also lived in the square—kind and good friends. She belonged to the Tyssen Amherst family.

We had many friends in the large comfortable houses near us, some of them enclosed in courts. There were a large proportion of doctors—Sir Astley Cooper, Mr Travers, a dear kind Dr Babington, Dr Birkbeck the philanthropist, and many other friends of my father's—most of them with powdered heads and silk stockings and *shorts*.

X Even the family of the great banker Mr Loyd lived over their bank in Lothbury, where their only child, the present Lord Overstone, was born. Mrs

Loyd was a dear friend of my mother's, and never came to see us without a parcel of beautiful toys for us. She was a large plain woman, speaking broad Lancashire—the truest and warmest of friends. Her carriage was always ready to take us anywhere we wanted. I remember driving with her and my mother *over* the Thames during the long frost of 1814, when the river was hard frozen for some months, and a kind of fair held on it. Opposite to our house was a passage called "Spinning Wheel Alley," in which I recollect seeing those old-fashioned articles for sale, which were then used in every cottage in the country. It led into the famous Moor Fields, where the citizens held their meetings in old times. I can just remember trees and grass there. The whole of one side was filled by Bethlehem Hospital—a fine old building, with a front garden enclosed by high iron railings and gates. The hospital and its unhappy inmates were then one of the shilling sights of London. I was never within it; but our maids used to be fond of taking us to walk in front of it, where they could see pale wild faces peeping through the barred windows, and were occasionally gratified by hearing shouts and screams. There were two fine statues of maniacs in the court, which I believe were removed to the new place when the old building was pulled down. I can just recollect going with my father to a place near, where I saw a very high brick mound with grass at the top, which workmen were pulling down, with great difficulty as it seemed. I

was told it was the last bit of the old London wall, and my father bade me remember it. It must have been more than seventy years ago.

My elder relations were nearly all authors by profession. Unlike the present time, literature was confined to a small and select circle. I remember with shame the contemptuous pity with which I regarded children whose relations had never written books—never seen their own names in *print*.

My little sisters and myself were always introduced as “the grand-daughters of Dr Aikin, and nieces of Mrs Barbauld;” some times as “grand-daughters of Gilbert Wakefield,” who was not then forgotten—all which must no doubt have been very bad for us as long as it lasted.

Stoke  
Newing-  
ton.

Those who now are acquainted with Stoke Newington would find it difficult to picture it as a single street leading from the high road to London to the church where my family now lie buried. The shops were intermingled with the private houses, some standing in large gardens, others in groups of four or five. The houses of my grandfather and aunt were opposite each other in about the middle of the street—Church Street, it was called. Dr Aikin’s was a long white one, Mrs Barbauld’s a square brick one; both are now pulled down.

Near the high road stood the Manor House formerly inhabited by Lady Abney. Dr Watts lived with her as chaplain. It was a fine old house, now destroyed, and the grounds turned into a

cemetery. Green lanes and fields surrounded the village, with the New River running bright and clear through them.

My grandfather's family here consisted of his wife, their only daughter, my aunt Lucy, and their youngest son Edmund, who was generally at home. They had three elder sons : my father, Charles Rochemont, was the third, and had been adopted in his second year by his aunt, Mrs Barbauld ; my eldest uncle Arthur, living then with my father and mother ; and my second uncle George, who was married and lived in the country.

It has always been a sorrow to me that my re- Dr Aikin.  
collection of my grandfather only comprehended the latter part of his life. In his best days he seems to have been a delightful man. I have indeed a very pleasant idea of him, but during the last four years of his life a second attack had impaired his intellects, and his death was at last hastened by the loss of his son Edmund, whom we all loved and mourned.

On the relinquishment of his professional life, Dr Aikin set himself vigorously to writing, as soon as his health would permit. He used to sit at his table in a most *uneasy* chair all day, with the exception of a walk in the fields, or an hour's work in the garden. This garden, full of beautiful flowers, and supplying all their vegetables and fruit, was the pleasure and occupation of the whole family, and the delight it afforded to the poor little London grandchildren may be imagined.

In the year 1785 Dr Aikin, on a vacancy occurring in the town of Yarmouth, by the removal of the principal physician, had been invited there by a letter signed by almost every one in the town, and though his wishes had been to try his fate in London, he did not think it right, with a young family about him, to lose so good an opening. He bought a pleasant house, and for some years enjoyed the respect and affection of the best society of the place. The great public events which soon followed, and in which he could not help taking a part, however imprudently, soon cast a cloud over his prospects. I quote from an account of her early life left by his daughter, my aunt, Lucy Aikin :—

Test Acts. “In 1788 the first motion was made in Parliament for the abolition of the slave trade. In the following year a motion for the abolition of the Corporation and Test Acts was made and lost. And of what importance could these events be to me, a child of seven years old? Of the greatest. They contributed more than any other causes to make me such as I am for good and for ill. Abstinence from sugar was a practice strenuously inculcated by the abolitionists of those days, as teetotalism has been in later times. . . . I should scarcely be believed were I to recount the bitter persecutions we poor children underwent in the children’s parties which we frequented, for the offence of denying ourselves *on principle* the dainties which children most delight in. But how were these hos-



tilities aggravated by the agitations of the repeal of the Test Act?

"The Dissenters felt themselves deeply aggrieved by the denial of their reasonable claims to be admitted to the rights of citizens. A paper war arose. My father published two pamphlets on the subject, warmly expressed. They were anonymous, but the author was soon suspected, and when questioned on the subject, his only answer was a warm denial of the right of any man to subject him to such an interrogation. This spirited reply was held equivalent to an avowal; he became a marked man; friends disowned and patients forsook him. . . . In the meantime, what was the lot of us poor little ones? Children persecuted by children for words, for names, of the meaning of which none of them had the slightest conception. I have sat a whole evening while others were dancing, because nobody would dance with a Presbyterian. I have been pushed, hunted, even struck, as I stood silent and helpless to the cry of Presbyterian. . . . I have never wondered at the accounts of martyr children. I am persuaded that in my tenth year I was capable of being a martyr myself."

If the poor children suffered thus, what must have been their father's feelings, knowing that they entirely depended on his exertions for their support. He did not indeed, like his friend Dr Priestley, expect to be obliged to fly for his life, and to see his home with all its contents burnt to ashes; but he soon resolved to leave Yarmouth for London, where he had relations

and friends of his own way of thinking. His only sister, Mrs Barbauld, was living at Hampstead, and warmly seconded his plans. The house at Yarmouth was sold, and one taken in London; and for a few years everything seemed to prosper. The second disappointment of all his worldly hopes was, as I have said, owing to illness :

A nature less fine, or a temper less sweet, would have made those about him unhappy by discontent and regrets. His devoted daughter says of him—

“We had no vain repinings to endure, no selfish exactions. While his illness continued he was gentle, affectionate; as health returned, we saw him active, cheerful, contented with the cheap pleasures still within his reach. The cultivation of a little garden, with a few of his favourite rock plants, and an aviary; a ramble in the neighbouring fields and villages; the easy chat of the domestic circle; the visits of a few of the old friends of London, and now and then a morning of sight-seeing in the great city, were enough to keep his mind in cheerfulness, and invigorate him for the mental labour which he loved.”

Extracts  
from let-  
ters.

A few extracts from his letters may be acceptable, written to his daughter when on visits to Mrs Fletcher at Edinburgh, Mr Roscoe, Dr Haygarth, near Bath, and Mr Taylor, at Norwich :—

“Dined at Johnson’s (the publisher’s) in company with Mr Paine, who is just publishing a new pamphlet. He is not like a gentleman, nor very agreeable in

conversation. In the evening I went to a *conversationé* at Dr Gregory's, where was a large company, among the rest Mrs Wollstoncraft and Mr (Sir James) Mackintosh. Mrs W. has just published her 'Rights of Woman,' a curious work, inculcating quite the masculine character in the sex, but full of good observations. She is, however, quite feminine in appearance, with a soft tone of voice, but converses somewhat like an authoress. Mr Mackintosh is a man of very agreeable manners and conversation, and seems to have very general knowledge. I like him much, and he has given me his card.

"This morning I have been quite at the west end of the town to call on Dr Parr, who is here to print a pamphlet. He received me with much friendship, and seemed pleased with my attention. Mr Mackintosh was there, so I had an hour's very agreeable chat. Returning, I called at the *Panorama*, and the birds at Exeter Change; both sights worth seeing.

"*June* 1805.—On Tuesday I dined with Phillips, who had got his tip-top literary acquaintance together. There was Sir John Dillon, author of the account of Spain and other things, a sort of broken-down old gentleman; Peter Pindar, Mr Edgeworth, the Belshams, Dr Gregory, Godwin, Prince Hoare, and two or three more. With Mrs P. and a young friend there was a girl from Connaught, just imported, a proficient in Irish music, of which she is going to publish a collection (Lady Morgan?), lively, not bashful, and *undrest* to the height of the mode. Peter

was at first dull, then somewhat waggish and rather coarse, which I attributed to the Irish girl. Mr Edgeworth rather rattling. I had enough by eight o'clock, and came home. We have had Edgeworth at Newington since, and he was entertaining. I put him upon talking about Rackrent, and he added some good traits of Irish manners.

"I have lately made a personal acquaintance with the famous Monsieur de Bouillé, in consequence of reviewing a translation of his memoirs. He appears to me très honnête homme, though a royalist, and much less of the militaire féroce than I should have supposed. We chat together like old acquaintance. I wonder what our ministerialists will say to the desertion of our last ally, the poor Queen of Portugal. I always thought we should be left upon the field after all the rest were marched off. Mr Hobhouse, I fancy, will not grieve much on the occasion. He has long devoted us to ruin, and perhaps will think the sooner the better. . . . How very contrary to the supposition of a progress in the human faculties to a steady point of truth and reason, is the present display of the intellectual powers. Astrology, and cow's breath, and the millennium, and prophecies, and *shapings*! surely we have outlived the age of reason, and have come to the age of fancy or whimsy!"

"I saw Paine at Johnson's to-day, who said, 'Well, I am on the outside of Newgate still!'

"You were obliged to Mr S. Rogers this week for an invitation to a water party up to Richmond. I

think the weather turned out pretty good, and no doubt you would have had good company ; but there is always some drawback to the pleasure of these oporose parties. Your mother and I had none in a delightful row upon the Lee some evenings since, in which we felt ourselves as independent as you and Arthur in your walks. . . . You must know that I am up to the middle in Sir C. Grandison. In an idle mood, tired of a dull ancient, I sent for *one* volume of Sir Charles', and my sister was so good as to return *seven*. I shrunk back at the sight ; but, recovering my fortitude, I made a beginning, and having with difficulty mastered half a volume, I got so much interested in the story that I could not help going on, and I now proceed at the rate of about a volume in two days, so that I shall only throw away a fortnight upon him. I often lay it down, exclaiming how insufferably prolix ! and presently take it up again. I was diverted with an estimate of literary fame given by a German writer. The epithet of *immortal*, he says, is the highest that can be given to a man of science. There are only six to whom the learned allow it—Galileo, Newton, Leibnitz, Boerthaave, Linnæus, and *Gramm* ; and who the deuce is *Gramm* ? I am sure I don't know ; ask Mr William Taylor."

To Edinburgh he writes:—" Having just read your long letter, I cannot forbear sitting down to tell our dear girl, how much we are gratified by the amusement she so copiously bestows upon us, and how good we think her in her frequent remembrances of home

amidst all the gay scenes in which she is plunged. . . . We are not less gratified with what we *hear about* you, for though you write almost as much as Miss Byron, you do not imitate her in telling all the fine things said of and to yourself. We were particularly delighted with a letter from Mrs Fletcher to my sister, in which she speaks of the pleasure and comfort they derive from your company, and of your *home* character, in terms that warm our hearts. A letter from Mr Holland also, contains Mrs Hamilton's testimony in your favour, and from another hand of the *figure* you make in Edinburgh, where you are, it seems, a very lion.

"*January 1, 1801.*—A happy new century to you, my dear! Shall I add, and many of them? No; I think the antediluvians must have been sadly *ennuied* unless the world had more novelties than it now has! . . . . Go on, my dear girl, in 'giggle and make giggle,' and trip lightly over those rough ways of the world where others stumble or stick fast.

"I had a pleasant visit yesterday at Clapham. There was a pretty large company, among the rest Mr Wilberforce, with whom I was much pleased. He conversed a good deal with my sister. He is of opinion that abstaining from sugar *does harm*, though he did not explain how. I own I am pretty well convinced that it can now do *no good*, for if the public is not more earnest in wishing the abolition, it will never be so; and while the demand is unlimited, the self-denial of a few can have no effect on it. As I

am convinced, too, that the public opinion runs strongly against all *innovation*, and that those who appear to have nicer feelings than their neighbours are looked upon with an evil eye, I can conceive that anti-saccharism may really throw a prejudice upon the cause.

“1815.—What can I say to political news? Why, that I doubt the tigers are not yet chained enough, and that I should be loth to change places with King Louis. He is now seated on the throne by foreign armies, and it is in vain to expect that the nation will ever forget it. Yet I doubt not they might enjoy as good a constitution under him as they are fit for,—a better, indeed, than their restoration of that scourge of Europe entitles them to. I own I am out of all patience with our Bonapartists, and cannot conceive how any person with a grain of wisdom can wish, after an experience of twenty-five years, that the French were trusted with their own destinies, or those of Europe!”

### CHAPTER III.

Mrs Barbauld's mother—Dr Doddridge's love letter—Works of Dr Aikin—Letter from Mr Roscoe of Liverpool.

Mrs Barbauld's mother.

A LETTER written by Mrs Aikin, sen., to her daughter, Mrs Barbauld, after her marriage, gives an account of Dr Aikin's young family to the aunt who had left them for her new home in Suffolk :—

*February 8, 1784.*

“MY DEAR DAUGHTER,—My thoughts are perpetually flying away to Palgrave, but, alas! they bring me no intelligence from thence, though I want to know a thousand things; how your health is, whether you have got a good housekeeper, &c., &c. I have suffered a great deal from my asthma this winter, and did not expect I should have got so far through, but it has pleased my good God hitherto to support my tottering frame, and I sometimes even flatter myself that I shall once more have the happiness of embracing my dearest child, into whose friendly bosom I could pour my inmost thoughts, and meet with a tender sympathy in all my sorrows.

“Your brother and sister are very well and happy. You say I must tell you something of the little ones. Lucy is perfectly healthy, as fat as a little doe, yet very active and strong, very forward both of her feet



and tongue, and has a fine expressive countenance. Edmund is a pretty little fellow, but rather delicate, and don't speak much plainer than his sister. I was in hopes he would have read prettily by this time, for I taught him all his letters when his mother was abroad, but he seems perfectly satisfied with that acquisition, and is in no haste to proceed any further, and there is no teaching children of that age, unless they have an inclination to it, which very few, I believe, have. I once, indeed, knew a little girl who was as eager to learn as her instructors could be to teach her, and who at two years old could read sentences and little stories in her *wise book* roundly without spelling, and in half a year more read as well as most women; but I never knew such another, and I believe never shall. Arthur, my son says, comes on very well in his learning, but he is quite a schoolboy, and has not yet made any acquaintance with the Graces."

The account of Mrs Barbauld's early proficiency having been denied in two or three notices of her, this extract is given in full; her mother was the most veracious of women. The grandchildren, whose backwardness she deplores, were both under four at this time. She was herself a well-educated and bright woman—the little Jenny Jennings whom Dr Doddridge wished to make his wife. He had been her tutor, the friend of her widowed mother, and she felt no other sort of affection for him. She married a few years later John Aikin, who was chosen Divinity Tutor at

the new Warrington Academy. They lived together in the happiness his almost perfect character and temper could not but inspire in her. After his death she went to live with her son and his wife at Warrington. She wrote often to her daughter, whose marriage was a great blow to her, the distance between Lancashire and Suffolk being then regarded much as a voyage to America would now be.

Dr Doddridge's  
love letter.

I am tempted to transcribe Dr Doddridge's love letter. It is written in a very small beautiful hand, and though intended for the daughter, is directed to *Mrs Jennings*, in *Harborough*, *Leicestershire*, and dated *Northampton*, May 29, 1730.

“DR. MAD<sup>m</sup>.—I owe Dear Miss Jenny and her good Mamma my earliest thanks for all the pleasure which I had in the Company of both at *Harborough*, and must confess that when I left it, I hardly expected so much as I found in conversing with *Miss Cotton* at *Maidwell*. It seems to me that I am going into a kind of Solitude when I am leaving you, but it prov'd otherwise on *Fryday*. Besides the satisfaction I always find in the Conversation of so valuable a Friend as *Lady Russell*, the Day I mention'd before gave me a great Deal. I know you hear this with a charitable Pleasure, and flatter yourself with a secret Hope that she is making a Conquest on a fond Heart, from which you might apprehend some farther Trouble. Of that, Mad<sup>m</sup>, you will judge when I tell you that the most delightful Part of her

Conversation was that which turn'd upon her Father and Mother, of whom she gave the following Account, which I humbly recommend to your serious Perusal.

“Mr Cotton was turn'd of 30 when he fell in Love w<sup>th</sup> the Lady who is now his Wife. She was then like yourself, a gay beautiful Creature, just in the Bloom of fifteen, in whom that truly wise and good Man discern'd those early Marks of Piety, Genius, Politeness, good Humour, and Discretion, which I am more and more admiring in you, and which engaged him to prefer her to those whose Age might have seem'd more suitable to his own. He pursued his Addresses with all possible Application, and exerted in her Service all the Tenderness with which so charming a Creature could inspire him, and all the politeness which he had learnt from a most liberal Education and several years' Travels thro' Italy and France, in the Company of some Persons of great Distinction, which renders him, in the Evening of Life, incomparably more agreeable than the generality of Mankind in its Morning or its Meridian. Miss Biddy (for that was her Name) treated him with all the Indifference in the World for two years together, and often declares that she treated him civilly as a Gentleman and a Friend, and the rather out of Regard to her Mamma, who had a great Respect and Affection for him, yet she never entertain'd any Thoughts of Love to him till within three Weeks of their Marriage. At last she gave him her Heart with her Hand in the 17<sup>th</sup> year of her Age, and ye

33<sup>d</sup> of his. And it is now almost half a Century that she has been rejoicing in it as the kindest Providence of her Life. They have been still the Joy of their Friends and each other, and are concluding an honourable and a delightful Life together as gracefully as any Couple I ever knew, and I verily believe that she is as dear to him now, tho' she is rather older than he, as she was in the first Months of their Marriage. I might make a variety of pertinent Reflections on this most entertaining Story, but I shall content my self with two, and leave the rest to your private Meditations.

“It is possible (you see) for a Man of a very agreeable and valuable Character, and for a Minister too, deliberately to chuse and passionatly to love a Lady considerably younger than himself, even an Infant of 15 (and how much more one who will be 16 in October), and he may be content for Life, fond and proud of that Choice.

“And then secondly and lastly (which is much more surprising than the former), that a Lady of that tender impressible Age may hear a Courtship (not the dullest or most despicable in the World) for two years without any Sentiment of Love or thoughts of Marriage, and yet afterwards receive it with an entire Consent and that peculiar Pleasure which I suppose Nothing upon Earth can give but the Surrender of the Heart to a worthy Man who has deserv'd it by a long Course of services and Sufferings.

“You must pardon me, Madam, if after all this I

conclude with my hearty wishes that if we live to the year 1770 a Daughter every way as agreeable and valuable as Miss Cotton, may be telling the same Story (as far as the inferiority of my Character will admit) of the lovely Infant, who is now smiling at so extravagant a thought, and her most affectionate Friend and obliged humble Servant,

P. DODDRIDGE.”

“Pray give my best Services to your dear Mamma, not forgetting my other Friends at Harborough. I long and yet I fear to see you. I hope to be with you in a few Days, but will keep your Brother here so long as I stay my self.”

Dr Aikin was on terms of friendship with most of the distinguished men of science and literature of his time. Works of  
Dr Aikin.

He was a most voluminous writer, many of his works (now probably forgotten) having had a large sale, and gone through many editions. The following is a list of his chief works :—

Thoughts on Hospitals.

Essay on Song Writing, with Collection.

Pieces in Prose. In conjunction with Mrs Barbauld.

Essay on Application of Natural History to Poetry.

Translation of Tacitus.

Life of Agricola.

Biographical Memoirs.  
 England Delineated.  
 Life of John Howard.  
 Evenings at Home. In conjunction with Mrs  
     Barbault.  
 Letters from a Father to his Son.  
 History of Manchester.  
 General Biography. Articles A nearly half the  
     work.  
 The Arts of Life.  
 Woodland Companion: Account of British  
     Trees.  
 Letters to a Young Lady on English Poetry.  
 Memoirs of Huet.  
 Essays: Literary and Miscellaneous.  
 Lives of John Selden and Archbishop Usher.  
 Annals of the Reign of George III.  
 British Poets, with Biographical Prefaces.

Letter  
 from Mr  
 Roscoe of  
 Liverpool.

The following letter from Mr Roscoe, *a propos* of  
 Miss Aikin's visit to Liverpool, may be of interest :—

“ ALLERTON, 30th August 1814.

“ To Dr Aikin.

“ MY DEAR SIR,—I am almost inexcusable in not  
 having sooner returned you my thanks for the pleasure  
 you have afforded us by the society of Miss Aikin,  
 which has certainly enlivened this old chateau beyond  
 anything it has before known. Nothing will now  
 satisfy us but

“ ‘Pomp and feast of revelry,  
     With mask and antique pageantry.’

"A few days since my eldest daughter's birthday was thus celebrated, and on Saturday last we had a little theatrical, in which Miss Aikin performed her part to such perfection as wholly to overthrow all our powers of gravity. In other respects I cannot say much for our industry, except that we have now and then a good dispute, especially whilst our friend Smyth, who is an excellent ingredient in the composition of a pleasant society, was of the party.

"I only wish, my dear sir, that you were here also, that, amongst other things, I might have an opportunity of telling you how entirely I agree with you in your sentiments on the late public events, which have terminated in a manner so unexpected by all the world. In addition, however, to what you have so justly stated, I must observe that, although there seems to be no hope whatever of that ultimate perfection in which some persons believe, and but little of any permanent improvement, yet it is still necessary to do what we can, lest things should grow still worse, and the darkness that threatens us should extinguish the little light that yet remains. But I, who am a perfect idler, labouring under the idlest of all complaints, a Bibliomania, should make such a remark to you, who are continually engaged in defending the cause of reason and truth, and holding up to future times the past examples of wisdom and virtue, is, I own, somewhat extraordinary. But though negligent myself, I am not willing to encourage a spirit of indifference in my friends, for we may be assured that

without a vigorous and unremitting resistance an inroad will speedily be made upon what we yet retain, and a rapid destruction will take place of all that is truly valuable among mankind.

"The account which you give, and Miss Aikin confirms, of your good health and studious occupations is highly gratifying. I have no doubt that the latter are a preservation of the former.

"You rejoice me in the prospect that the same long and affectionate attachment which has subsisted between us may be continued amongst our children.\*

"This, I presume, will be delivered you by my sons William and Robert, who are passing through the metropolis on their way to Paris, and will, if possible, pay a visit to Newington.

"I have just left Miss Aikin in excellent spirits at tea, and am most truly,—My dear Sir, your obliged and ever affectionate friend, "WM. ROSCOE."

\* As it has done down to the present generation, cemented in later years by a near and dear connection.




## CHAPTER IV.

Lucy Aikin—Mrs Aikin—Mrs Kinder—Edmund Aikin—Thomas Campbell—  
Stoke Newington—Mrs Barbauld.

MY aunt Lucy Aikin, when I first recollect her, <sup>Lucy Aikin.</sup> was as incessantly employed with her pen as her father. She early published a "Memoir of the Court of Queen Elizabeth." It had an immediate success. I believe it was the first work of the kind in England, though not in France, and she was nearly the first female writer of history. The reviews were unanimous in their praise. She received flattering letters from almost every known author, and invitations of every kind poured in upon her. The first edition was quickly sold, and five or six followed. She was too sensible and dignified to be overcome by this popularity; but she enjoyed keenly then, and for the rest of her life, the access to the best literary society in the country which her fame had earned for her. She was the best of daughters and sisters—good and warm-hearted, and the most delightful of conversers—that art of conversation which seems likely to become a thing of the past.

She had, however, a quick and satirical temper, which made me as a child regard her with as much fear as love. Many years after, when she chose our



house for her home, I used to feel surprised to see the ease with which my children talked to her. Her kind instructions and conversation were of incalculable advantage to them, and we all owe her a debt of gratitude never to be repaid. She lived twenty years with us, and ended her life under our roof at the age of eighty-one.

My aunt had several offers of marriage, but she had been attached in early youth to one every way worthy of her, and did not on his death feel inclined to bestow her affections on another, but found in her own family sufficient interests to satisfy her warm heart. She followed her memoirs of Elizabeth by a similar history of King James I., and of Charles I. She afterwards wrote the life of Addison. She had, before these more important works, written many useful and entertaining children's books.

Late in life she began a correspondence with Dr Channing, whose friendship, though they never met, was a source of the purest delight to her. My husband published their correspondence after her death.

My grandmother was a sweet gentle old lady, with a small neat figure, bright dark eyes, and refined manners and taste. She survived her beloved husband, who was also her cousin, many years, and removed with her daughter to Hampstead after Mrs Barbauld's death.

The following lines, written by her under a likeness

she had taken of her sister-in-law, describe her accurately :—

“ Of gentle manners, and of taste refined,  
 With all the graces of a polished mind,  
 Clear sense and truth still shone in all she spoke,  
 And from her lips no idle sentence broke.  
 Each nicer elegance of art she knew  
 Correctly fair and elegantly true ;  
 Her ready fingers plied with equal skill  
 The pencil's task, the needle's, or the quill.  
 So poised her feelings, so composed her soul,  
 So subject all to reason's calm control.  
 One only passion, strong and unconfined,  
 Disturbed the balance of her even mind,  
 One passion ruled despotic in her breast,  
 In every look, and word, and thought expressed ;  
 But that was Love, and Love delights to bless  
 The generous transports of a fond excess.”

The reader of Scott will remember four lines in the  
 “ Lady of the Lake ” strongly resembling the end of  
 this little poem, written fifty years before :—

“ One only passion unrevealed,  
 With maiden pride the maid concealed,  
 But not less purely felt the flame,  
 Oh ! need I tell that passion's name ? ”

Mrs Aikin was descended by her mother from the Mrs Aikin.  
 ancient family of Cornwall. Her uncle Mr Cornwall  
 lived in Portland Place, in one of the newly built  
 houses there. He was a very kind and generous  
 relation to her. He left one son, to whom he gave a  
 large fortune, and endowed six daughters with hand-

some fortunes. At a watering-place where he was residing with his family, he one day received a visit from that "gallant tar," Sir Alan Gardner.

"Mr Cornwall," said the admiral, "I have called to let you know that your son is paying attentions to my daughter. Now, I cannot give my girl a fortune, so I thought it right to come and inform you, that you might put a stop to the thing if you thought fit."

"Sir Alan, if you cannot give your daughter a fortune, I can give my son enough for both. We will let the young people alone, if you please."

Such was the British tar, and such the British merchant, says my Aunt Lucy, who told the story, and adds that she never forgot the single view she had of the lovely and charming young lady.

Mrs Kinder.

My grandmother's only sister lived close to them in Church Street. She was an affectionate, lively woman, of whom all the family were extremely fond; indeed, she was their principal inducement to come to Newington at first. She and my grandmother were fondly attached to each other, having been motherless little sisters, with a not too kind stepmother; yet the manners of the time were so formal, that once in an eager intimate conversation Mrs Kinder, having dropped her sister's name—Patty—she instantly stopped short, looked distressed, and added, "I beg pardon; I mean, *sister*!"

Edmund Aikin.

Another member of the family at Newington was my uncle Edmund, a most amiable and cultivated

man, who unfortunately died in the prime of life. Owing to an impediment in his speech, his parents did not like to send him to school, but undertook his education themselves, which they were well able to do. He early showed so great a talent for drawing, that they determined to make him an architect. I think myself he should have been an artist, as he had a wonderful power of designing the most beautiful and correct groups without a moment's hesitation or difficulty. He also took excellent likenesses of all his family and friends, which I possess. He was a member of the Architectural Society, and obtained considerable success in his profession. He resided a considerable time in early life with General Sir Samuel Bentham, assisting him in several engineering public works at Sheerness, Portsmouth, &c. His little nieces were very fond of him, and his death was a great shock to us—the first we had known in the family.

About this time a new poet appeared, who was warmly welcomed by my family. Thomas Campbell's beautiful "Pleasures of Hope," and still more, his stirring odes, were on every one's lips.

Living rather out of the world, the Newington party had not met him ; but one Sunday, when they were waiting for their early dinner, "Mr Campbell" was announced. They were a good deal surprised, but equally glad to see the young poet they had thought so much about ; and as he seemed disposed to stay, they asked him to join their dinner-table. He con-

sented, and made himself most agreeable. During dinner Dr Aikin thought he should like his sister to see him also, and he desired the servant to go across to Mrs Barbauld, and ask if she would come in to tea. At this Mr Campbell started violently. "Mrs Barbauld!" said he; "am I not in her house? I was engaged to dine with her, and I thought I was with her now."

No doubt poor Mrs Barbauld had been waiting and expecting him. I suppose it ended by their all spending the rest of the evening together; but I was not present, so I know no more about the rest of the evening.

Stoke  
Newington.

My relations had not many congenial friends in the dull village of Stoke Newington when they first went there. There were a good many Quaker families—nice, kind, respectable people, but not inclined to visiting beyond their own set. There were also many Jewish families. One, old Mr Israel, Dr Aikin was called in to attend on his death-bed; he was the grandfather of the late Lord Beaconsfield.

Jews were then in a very different social position to that they now enjoy. They were treated with the greatest coldness and dislike by the other inhabitants of the place, and not visited by any one.

Mrs Barbauld's benevolent liberality was shocked at this ungenerous treatment; and, being secretary of a Book Society she had lately established, she with difficulty prevailed upon the other members to admit one or two Jewish ladies into the society. They

received the invitation with surprise and gratitude, one of them saying with tears in her eyes, "I never thought to live to see the day when one of *us* would be allowed to join such a thing."

They all remained her devoted friends to the end of her life, and she derived much pleasure from her intercourse with them.

My Aunt Barbauld lived till I was nearly eighteen, and being the eldest child of her adopted son, and bearing her own name, I was treated with particular kindness by her; and from the age of three years used to pay her long visits. I was, on the whole, very happy there, though I disliked leaving my home, my dear mother and little sisters.

Among her other good qualities, my aunt was very courageous. Towards the end of her life, when living alone with two female servants, her house was broken into by burglars. They entered a small parlour on the ground floor, and completely sacked it, as well as the dining-room adjoining it, actually taking up and carrying off a large carpet among other things. My aunt slept in a room above adjoining the drawing-room; not only alone, but two stories below the servants, whose room was reached by a separate staircase. We were dreadfully alarmed for her when the news came to us in town; it was long before the days of the new police, and the back of her house was surrounded by fields. She was perfectly cool and calm, however; only remarking how lucky it was they had not come upstairs, as she had a good deal of money in her

desk; and she would not be persuaded to alter her arrangements, or have a maid near her. It was therefore no wonder that she had no misgivings at putting me, a tiny child, to sleep on a floor quite alone, in a large room with a four-post bed, with a strange and ugly pattern in the hangings, and out of hearing of every one. She little thought that the poor little girl lay awake for hours every night in an agony of terror, relieved only by hearing the hours cried by the old watchman crying out, "A starlight night," or, "A cloudy morning." I stood in too much awe of her ever to complain, but though rather stern, she was fond of, and very kind to me always; partly, no doubt, for my father's sake, whom she loved above all persons. He spent every Sunday with her, and paid her all the attention of a son. I used to walk with her as long as she was able to go out. There was a pretty place of which we were both very fond, called "Queen Elizabeth's Walk," a gravelled avenue of large trees, with benches under them, leading at the end into what were called the "forty acre fields," with the New River running clear and sparkling along them. I suppose the fields are now covered with bricks, and the trees felled. I have not seen the place for more than sixty years.

Close to my aunt's was a pretty old house, once belonging to De Foe. It was then occupied by Mr Frend, known as a mathematician, and otherwise gifted. He was a good neighbour to my aunt, in often coming in to play chess with her, of which she



was extremely fond. Mr Frend had a family of young daughters, with whom we were very intimate. The eldest afterwards married the celebrated Professor De Morgan, and after his death published a most interesting memoir of him. In it she says that her father's old house at Newington is pulled down, and the pretty grounds cut to pieces—a common fate near London!

My aunt taught me to read by writing in print hand little sentences and stories relating generally to the events of the day,—I have them all now; and, best of all, would tell me charming stories, which I think she invented as she went on.

She was troubled with asthma for the last fifteen years of her life. I have seen her rush to the window on a cold winter's night, and hang out gasping for breath; but beyond this distressing complaint, she had never had an illness, or been confined to her bed a single day in her life, except when she had the small-pox in her childhood. She was a very pretty old lady. I have a cameo taken by her friend, Mr Wedgewood, which is very beautiful; but we had no other likeness of her, as she constantly refused to allow one to be taken. But once when my mother was bringing her friend Miss Smirke to visit her, she begged her to put her pencils in her pocket, and after some trouble, Mrs Barbauld let her make a drawing, which I now have.

She told me that the first event she could recollect was the agitated talk in the family whether they

should leave home in the year 1745, on the expected arrival of the Pretender's army, their village of Kibworth being in the high road to London. The news of his defeat, which next reached them, put an end to their alarm.

I was told an odd anecdote of my aunt's first interview with Sir Walter Scott in Edinburgh. He had expressed to Mrs Fletcher, whom she was visiting, a great wish to see her, and a party was accordingly made for the purpose, and they were introduced in form. To the surprise and vexation of Mrs Fletcher Sir Walter only bowed and turned away. Some time later he again heard her name, and then exclaimed, "Is that Mrs *Barbold*? I thought when you said Mrs *Barbo* it must be somebody else," and he then began an animated conversation with her.

Charles Lamb had still another way of pronouncing the name. He used to talk of his *bald* ladies—Mrs Inchbald and Mrs Barbauld.

My own recollection is only of her old age. How glad I should have been to remember her best days, though her intellects remained unimpaired to the end. A fact I have learnt about her from a letter quite lately come to light, that when she felt bound in honour to accept Mr Barbauld, she had an offer of marriage from Mr Howard, the relation and honoured friend of her family. How different and how much happier would have been her lot with such a husband!

Mr Barbauld died in 1808. He had been for some years in a nervous irritable state, most distressing to

his wife, though he could always control himself in the presence of a third person, to whom he ever appeared the well-bred gentleman, with lively and polished French manners. His father was domestic chaplain to the Princess of Orange, the daughter of George II., and accompanied her to Cassel, where his son Rochemont was born, and passed his childhood. He was intended by his father for the Church of England ; but unadvisedly sending him to the Warrington Academy, he imbibed opinions which impelled him to give up these prospects, to open a school, and, after much difficulty, to persuade Dr Aikin to give him his daughter.

For many years his mental disorder only appeared in fits of passion at home, but at Newington he got much more violent. He once kept her locked up in an upper room all day, and another time flew at her with a carving knife, from which she only escaped by jumping out of the window into the garden. After this, however, her brother and nephew interfered, and persuaded her to consent to his absence from home. He was prevailed upon to give up the house to her, and lodgings were taken for him next door to my father's, where he dined every day. My mother said that for all this he was kind and gentle to her ! and was much delighted when I, the first baby, came into the world, rushing out the moment he heard the news to buy a *pound of barley sugar* for the little one. He had an experienced servant who used to walk out with him, but being imprudently trusted with

money, he one day bribed the man to allow him to walk alone. He never returned, and search being made, his body was found the next day in the New River.

The following touching lines express her feelings on his death :—

DIRGE.

Pure spirit ! O where art thou now !  
O whisper to my soul !  
O let some soothing thought of thee,  
This bitter grief control !

'Tis not for thee the tears I shed,  
Thy sufferings now are o'er ;  
The sea is calm, the tempest past,  
On that eternal shore.

No more the storms that wrecked thy peace  
Shall tear that gentle breast ;  
Nor Summer's rage, nor Winter's cold,  
Thy poor, poor frame molest.

Thy peace is sealed, thy rest is sure,  
My sorrows are to come ;  
Awhile I weep and linger here,  
Then follow to the tomb.

Farewell ! With honour, peace, and love,  
Be thy dear memory blest !  
Thou hast no tears for me to shed,  
When I too am at rest.

In spite of the long years of suffering and anxiety which he had brought upon her, his tragical end left a void in her life never to be filled up. A beautiful poem which she published after his death provoked so savage an attack in the *Quarterly*, that she was

quite discouraged from writing again for the public, though we have many little manuscript poems written within a short time of her death.

Mr Robinson told me that Murray, the publisher of the *Quarterly*, said he was more ashamed of the article on Mrs Barbauld than anything he had ever printed.

Miss Edgeworth writes on this occasion :—

“ . . . I cannot describe to you the indignation, or rather the disgust, that we felt at the manner in which you are treated in the *Quarterly Review*—so ungentlemanlike, so unjust, so insolent a review I never read. My father and I, in the moment of provocation, snatched up our pens to answer it, but a minute’s reflection convinced us that silent contempt is the best answer—that one should not suppose it possible that it *can* hurt anybody with the generous British public but the reviewers themselves. The lines even which they have picked out with most malicious intent are excellent, and speak for themselves. But it is not their criticism on your poem which incenses me. It is the odious tone in which they dare to speak of the most respectable and elegant female writer that England can boast. The public will do you justice ! ”

She then intreats her “ dear Mrs Barbauld ” to write “ 1812 ” in a more hopeful strain, and commemorate the victories and death of the great Nelson.

I suppose that after a time my aunt found it trying to live alone in her large house, as a lady called Miss

Hamond was there as long as I can remember. She was sister of a Mr Elton Hamond, introduced to my aunt by the Edgeworths. He was a young man of good fortune, clever, handsome, and agreeable, but always rather odd. Mr Robinson gives an interesting account of him in his diary, and of his being sent for one morning to his chambers, where he was shocked to find Mr Hamond had destroyed himself, leaving an eloquent letter to justify the action. Mr Robinson also told me long after, that he found among his papers one entitled, "The best way of killing Mrs Barbauld," whether by shooting, stabbing, or by poison, so that she really had been running a frightful risk every time he came to see her.

His sister, though she had good manners and appearance, was mentally about the most unsuitable person in the world to be a companion to my aunt, though they went on living together many years, constantly disagreeing and disputing. They were both so kind to me, that I remember feeling much troubled at this state of things, and wishing they were fonder of each other.

On one subject I entirely agreed with Miss Hamond. She was very musical, and my aunt, like all the elders of my family, disliked it, and was greatly annoyed at Miss Hamond's constant performance on a powerful grand piano in the next room to where she sat. I was almost ashamed to say how much I liked hearing it, and would sit for hours perched up on a high stool by her.

Miss Hamond's ignorance of common things was a constant amusement to all around her. If she had a hard egg at breakfast, she would send it down to be boiled softer. When her ear was syringed for deafness, she would hold the sponge to the *opposite* side of her head. Walking in the garden, she said, pointing to the west, "I see such a light out there every evening, what can it be?" And when people were talking of a woman called the "Female Husband," who had married, and passed for a man all her life, Miss Hamond, with a doubtful expression, said to my father, "No *family*, I suppose."

When at length Miss Hamond left, my aunt made trial of a paid companion; but it did not answer; and she remained alone till about a week before her death, when she was moved into my grandmother's house. The last journey she took was to pay a visit to her old friends, Dr and Mrs Estlin, at Bristol. From them she went for a few days to see Mrs Hannah More, a very old friend. She writes an account of this visit to her brother, Dr Aikin:—

"You ask me how my visit to Mrs More's went off. Very pleasantly indeed. Nothing could be more friendly than their reception, and nothing more charming than their situation.

"An extensive view over the Mendip Hills is in front of their house, with the pretty church of Wrington. Their house (cottage, because it is thatched) stands on the declivity of a rising ground, which they have planted and made quite a little paradise. The

five sisters, all good old maids, have lived together these fifty years, without any breach having been made in their little community by death or any other cause of separation. Hannah More is a good deal broken by illness, but possesses fully her powers of conversation, and her vivacity. We exchanged riddles, like the wise men of old. I was given to understand she is writing something.

"Hannah had read with great pleasure your 'Selden and Usher,' and thought it *very liberal*."



## CHAPTER V.

Mr H. C. Robinson—Dr Priestley—Mr Howard—Josiah Wedgewood.

AMONG the earliest friends of my family I must place Mr Henry Crabb Robinson, the friend of Goethe and Wordsworth, and acquainted with all the most distinguished persons in England and the Continent during an unusually long life. As a young man he was employed by the *Times* as foreign correspondent; and afterwards being called to the Bar, went what was then called the Norfolk Circuit. His powers of conversation, high character, warm feelings, and perfect veracity and good humour, made him a welcome guest in very different circles, and no appeal was ever made in vain to his generous kindness. His letters and diaries, published after his death by Dr Sadler, are most interesting, especially to persons as advanced in age as myself. I seem to live my life over again in reading them. I believe he was sincerely attached to my Aunt Barbauld, and also to my mother; but he did not quite do justice to the other members of my family; not being able to discover the warm and tender feelings which lay under somewhat cold manners. He once said to me, when a very young girl, "The Aikins were the stiffest, coldest, dryest people I ever knew; your mother came

among them like an angel of light." Perceiving, I suppose, my surprise and dismay at this attack, he added quickly, "*You* are her very image."

To me, indeed, he was always most kind and affectionate, and I deeply regretted a quarrel which he had at last with my Aunt Lucy, when she was an inmate of our house, prevented our ever inviting him. He acknowledged that he had been the most to blame, and wished to be reconciled; but she had been so much wounded by some words he let fall, that she could not make up her mind to see him again.

Mr Robinson gives the following account of his first introduction to Mrs Barbauld, and I remember him a frequent guest at her simple dinner-table on Sundays, often bringing a friend, or at any rate a book or new pamphlet to read to her.

#### DIARY OF MR H. C. ROBINSON.

"1805-6.—In December I formed a new acquaintance, of which I was reasonably proud. At Hackney I saw repeatedly Miss Wakefield, a charming girl; and one day at a party, when Mrs Barbauld had been the subject of conversation, and I had spoken of her in enthusiastic terms, Miss Wakefield came to me and said, 'Would you like to know Mrs Barbauld?' I exclaimed, 'You might as well ask me whether I should like to know the Angel Gabriel.' 'Mrs Bar-

bauld is, however, much more accessible ; I will introduce you to her nephew.' She then called to Charles Aikin, whom she soon after married, and he said, 'I dine every Sunday with my uncle and aunt at Stoke Newington, and I am expected always to bring a friend with me. Two knives and forks are laid for me. Will you go with me next Sunday ?' Gladly acceding to the proposal, I had the good fortune to make myself agreeable, and I soon became intimate in the house.

"Mrs Barbauld bore the remains of great personal beauty. She had a brilliant complexion, light hair, blue eyes, a small, elegant figure, and her manners were very agreeable, with something of the generation then departing. She received me very kindly, spoke very civilly of my aunt Zachary Crabbe, and said she had herself once slept at my father's house.

"Mrs Barbauld is so well known by her prose writings that it is needless for me to attempt to characterise her here. Her excellence lay in the soundness and acuteness of her understanding, and in the perfection of her taste. In the estimation of Wordsworth, she was the first of our literary women, and he was not bribed to this judgment by any especial congeniality of feeling, or by concurrence in speculative opinions. I may here relate an anecdote concerning her and Wordsworth, though out of its proper time by many, many years ; but it is so good that it ought to be preserved from oblivion. It was after her death that Lucy Aikin published Mrs Barbauld's collected

works, of which I gave a collection to Miss Wordsworth. Among the poems is a stanza on 'Life,' written in extreme old age. It had delighted my sister, to whom I repeated it on her death-bed. It was long after I gave these works to Miss Wordsworth, that her brother said, 'Repeat me that stanza by Mrs Barbauld.' I did so. He made me repeat it again. And so he learnt it by heart. He was at that time walking in his sitting-room at Rydal, with his hands behind him; and I heard him mutter to himself, 'I am not in the habit of grudging people their good things, but I wish I had written those lines.'

“‘ Life, we’ve been long together,  
Through pleasant and through cloudy weather,  
’Tis hard to part when friends are dear,  
Perhaps ’twill cost a sigh, a tear;  
Then steal away, give little warning,  
Choose thine own time;  
Say not good night, but in some brighter clime  
Bid me good morning.”’

Dr Priest-  
ley.

I was too young ever to have seen Dr and Mrs Priestley, the early and beloved friends of my family, especially of Mrs Barbauld, who used, in her early life, to pay long visits to them at Leeds. My Aunt Lucy has often spoken of the delight with which, in her childhood, she used to listen to the animated conversation and arguments between Dr Priestley and her father, trying in vain to understand them. Mrs Priestley, too, whose admirable courage and energy supported her husband through all the trials of his

persecuted life, and who accompanied him when, quite disheartened by the burning of his house and precious manuscripts by the cruel and savage Birmingham mob, he resolved to end his days in free America.

When the time drew near for their departure, Mrs Priestley came up to London and called on my grandmother, who naturally expected, from their long intimacy, that she had come to talk over their future plans ; but though she was more than ever affectionate, she left without so much as alluding to them, and her friends did not like to begin the subject. When she took leave, however, she asked them to allow little Lucy to go with her to some shops, to which they willingly agreed ; and on the child's return, asking her where she had been, "Oh mamma," said she, "I went to a strange, underground room, full of nothing in the world but boxes of all sorts and sizes, and Mrs Priestley bought a great quantity of them, and told me to tell you where I had been." Mrs Aikin sighed, and well understood. I possess an interesting letter from Dr Priestley to Mrs Barbauld, from America, a few years after. He speaks of his excellent wife's death very feelingly, and adds :—

"I am under particular obligations to you for taking under your care a daughter of Sally (his married daughter). A friend in need, they say, is a friend indeed, and such you are to her ; and I consider it as more than any act of friendship to myself. Poor Sally's marriage, which at one time seemed very

promising, is now, I fear, likely to turn out otherwise, and her trial must be very great. What I can do to assist them I certainly will. . . . What Mr F. can do, after spending the handsome fortune his uncle left him, I cannot tell. My resource is in the consideration of a wise Providence, which overrules all events. Sally has also a strong sense of religion, which, I hope, will carry her through."

Dr Priestley was too sanguine. Poor Mrs F., deserted by her worthless husband, deprived by their absence of the support of her parents, and overburdened with a large family of little children, fell into a decline and died. After her death they found, neatly packed away in drawers, a complete suit of mourning for each child, made entirely by her own hands, with the name of each pinned on.

Lucy Aikin writes:—"I have a vivid memory of Priestley, the friend of my father, the dearer and more intimate friend of my aunt (Barbauld). In his manners he had all the calmness and simplicity of a true philosopher; he was cheerful, even playful, and I still see the benignant smile with which he greeted us little ones. My aunt has said of him, with as much truth as brilliancy, that 'he followed truth as a man who hawks follows his sport—at full speed, straightforward, looking only upward, and regardless into what difficulties the chase may lead him.'"  
—Letter to Dr Channing.

In the collection of the letters of Dr Aikin and Mrs Barbauld to each other, from which I have quoted,

there is constant mention of their beloved and illustrious friend, John Howard. His estate of Cardington, Bedfordshire, where he generally lived, is near Harlington, and he was related to the Whitbreads, the family of Mr Jennings's second wife; and, on the death of his only son, he left his estate to that family.

Mr Howard.

His education in early life having been very defective, he never attained a ready pen, and therefore engaged my grandfather to write and correct all his documents and prison reports, and left him his literary executor. On his return from his various journeys he would always visit Dr Aikin. My aunt Lucy also says in a letter :—

“Several months ago you asked me whether I had not seen Mr Howard, the patriarch of English philanthropists. I answered that I had, and that, eight years' child as I was, I retained the most distinct recollections of his person, his manners, and his interesting conversation with us children, to whom he was ever full of kindness.

“It was in the summer of 1789 that John Howard, previously to setting out on his last mission, passed ten days at Yarmouth in consultation with my father. Child as I was, the impression he made on me was indelible; a small man, brisk in his movements, with a lively eye and expressive countenance, extremely fond of children, and entertaining them with narrations fitted to them. His image is still before my eyes.”

The letter breaks off here, but I learn, from Dr Aikin's life, published after Mr Howard's death, that before his attention was turned to the management of prisons, he had devoted his time and much of his large fortune to the state of the poor, and to building cottages on his estate.

His attention to persons "sick and in prison" is by himself dated as far back as 1756, when he was induced to visit Lisbon, then lying in the ruins of its terrible earthquake. The packet in which he sailed being taken by a French privateer, he, with the rest of the crew, was exposed to the barbarities of those licensed pirates, and on his arrival in France he, for a time, endured the hardships of a prisoner of war, and became acquainted with the sufferings of his countrymen in the same situation, which, on his return home, he made known to the "Commissioners of Sick and Wounded Seamen," who gave him thanks, and exerted themselves to procure redress. On his being soon after appointed Sheriff of Bedfordshire, the state of the prisons of the county engaged his attention, and he henceforward devoted himself to the subject, visiting all the county gaols in England, and afterwards in France, Germany, Holland, and Belgium. At last, revisiting these countries, and extending his tour to Russia and Tartary, he died of the plague caught at Cherson in the year 1790.


Mrs Aikin's letters contain the following notices of their friend :—

"Mr Howard is setting out upon another tour to



the north-west of England. He looks well, and happy, and lively; he has been south as far as Moscow, where he says they live in all the Asiatic magnificence. He told me of a Russian nobleman who has built a convent, where he has educated, at his own expense, 600 young ladies, by whose means he hopes to polish the empire. . . . .”

“Mr Howard left us yesterday, to the great regret of all who had the happiness of his acquaintance. He is indeed an astonishing person. Where could another be found who would incur the expense, fatigue, and danger which he has done in visiting three times over every prison in England, besides many in foreign parts, where one has brought one's appetite under such subjection as to be able to live almost without eating? He takes nothing but a dish of tea or coffee and a mouthful of bread and butter till night, and then eats only a few potatoes, and drinks nothing but water; and yet he never seems to want either spirits or strength, and is a most lively, entertaining companion. He once told them that, wishing, whilst in Paris, to see the Bastille, he made inquiries for that purpose, and finding it quite impossible to obtain an order, he determined to try without one. Accordingly, he boldly drove up to the gates in a handsome carriage and four, with several servants in livery, dressed himself like a gentleman of the court. Stepping out of the carriage with an air of authority, he desired to be shown over the building. The officials, taken by surprise, and never



doubting, from his deportment, his right to be obeyed, permitted him to examine everything he chose. . . .

"Mr Howard is now in Italy, from whence he means to go to Sicily, and then to Constantinople. If he escapes the plague or a prison, I shall think him indeed heaven-protected."

Josiah  
Wedgewood.

Josiah Wedgewood, the English Palissy, was an early friend of my family. Mrs Barbauld in her youth paid a visit to his house, "Etruria," and sat for her likeness in a beautiful cameo, which I possess. Besides his great technical knowledge, Mr Wedgewood was a man of elegant taste and general cultivation. He made a large fortune, which he spent with princely generosity and delicate kindness to all who applied to him. I heard of his inviting a large party of his young relations to dinner, and on opening their napkins, each found a note for £1000 wrapped in them. My father also told me of his being present when Mr Wedgewood was dining with his sister, and at the end of the meal, perceiving a few cracks in the plates, he took out his pocket-knife, and broke every piece of china on the table. The next morning his sister received from him a beautiful new dinner service.

He was grandfather to the illustrious Charles Darwin, and his amiable and benevolent brother, Erasmus, who seem to have inherited from him both his generosity and fine temper.

Our houses used to be full of the beautiful ware. We ought to have been more careful of them, if we had known how valuable they would become. I

especially remember a pair of chimney ornaments in my mother's room—two beautiful little female figures seated on cushions, each with an open book on her knees, and in one hand a gilt flower cup to hold a candle. They were sent as a wedding present to my mother from Mrs Barbauld, with the following lines :—

“ Sister, who with me doth hold  
The open book and lamp of gold,  
Say whence the lamp, and what the book  
On which thine eyes unwearied look ?

“ Mine the lamp of Science bright,  
Here I muse from morn till night,  
The stores of Rome and Greece I spoil,  
And feed my lamp with Attic oil ;  
While for my mistress I explore  
The treasures deep of ancient lore,  
And from their blooms a garland bind  
To deck her pure and polished mind.

“ The golden lamp of Love I bear,  
A brighter flame, a nobler care ;  
In critic learning all unskilled,  
My page with softer lines is filled ;  
Here in my tablet I record  
Every fond and faithful word  
That Love hath spoke, and Hymen sworn,  
To Heaven the words, the vows were borne.  
I trim my lamp with duteous care,  
And guard from blasts of ruder air,  
And zealous feed its holy fires  
With incense drawn from chaste desires,  
From gentle deeds and rosy smiles,  
And honeyed speech that care beguiles ;  
And while I thus supply my urn,  
Its constant torch shall ever burn.

“ Then let our mingling flames unite,  
The mingled flames shall burn more bright ;  
May never from this hearth remove  
The lamp of Science or of Love ! ”


My father's lamp of Science burned long, my poor mother's lamp of Love was soon extinguished by the hand of Death.

## CHAPTER VI.

Hampstead—Joanna Baillie—Destruction of the Bastille—Lord Daer—Dr Johnson  
—Remove to Newington—Sir Walter Scott.

THE acquaintance of my family with Hampstead is of very long standing. In 1786 Mr and Mrs Barbauld, after a year spent on the Continent, returned to England, and Mr Barbauld was chosen minister of the little chapel on Rosslyn Hill. Mrs Barbauld writes to her brother in the October of this year :—

“We are very glad to have exchanged that situation (lodgings in London) for our present lodgings at Hampstead, which are very agreeable in every respect, except that they are lodgings, and even from this circumstance we enjoy greater freedom from care. Hampstead is certainly the pleasantest village about London. The mall of the place, a kind of *terrass*, which they call Prospect Walk, commands a most extensive and varied view over Middlesex and Berkshire, in which is included, besides many inferior places, the majestic Windsor and lofty Harrow, which last is so conspicuously placed that, you know, King James called it ‘God’s visible Church upon earth.’ Hampstead and Highgate are mutually objects to each other, and the road between them is delightfully pleasant, lying along Lord Mansfield’s fine woods, and the Earl of Southampton’s *ferme ornée*. Lady



Mansfield and Lady Southampton, I am told, are both admirable dairy women, and so jealous of each other's fame that they have had many heart-burnings, and have once or twice been very near a serious falling out on the dispute which of them could make the greatest quantity of butter from such a number of cows. On observing the beautiful smoothness of the turf in some of the fields, I was told the gentlemen to whom they belonged had them rolled like a garden plot. I imagine we shall stay here till pretty late in the autumn; but if we enjoy the sunny gleams, we shall likewise endure many a cutting blast, for I think, except Avignon, this is the most windy place I ever was in. As we have no house, we are not visited except by those with whom we have connections; but few as they are, . . . we have not been six days alone. This is a matter I do not altogether relish, for they make very long tea-drinking afternoons, and a whole long afternoon is really a piece of life. . . . I pity the young ladies of Hampstead; there are several very agreeable ones. One gentleman, in particular, has five tall marriageable daughters, and not a single young man is to be seen in the place. But of widows and old maids such a plenty! Charles is perfectly well; he goes every day to a Mr Alexander's, who has a large school in this neighbourhood—so large that last vacation, having resolved to give those who stayed a little amusement, he hired a hoy to take them to Margate, and how many do you think there were? Only *seventy*."

The following letter was returned to us after Mr Rogers's death ; he had always preserved it carefully :—

"To Mr Sam Rogers, Junr., Newington Green.

"SIR,—We are obliged to you for much elegant amusement through the books which we safely received, and which we shall beg leave to keep a little longer. Your visit was so short that we wish to think of anything which may induce you to make us a longer ; and as we are to have an assembly at the Long Room on Monday next, the 22nd, which they say will be a pretty good one, I take the liberty to ask whether it will be agreeable to you to be of our party, and in that case we have a bed at your service.

"I could, I am sure, have my petition supported by a round robin of the young ladies of Hampstead, which would act like a spell, and oblige your attendance ; but not being willing to make use of such compulsory methods, I will only say how much pleasure it would give to, Sir, your obliged and obedient servant,

"A. L. BARBAULD."

"HAMPSTEAD, *October* (probably 1787).

"Our dinner-hour, if you can give us your company to dinner, is half after three."

We get the first glimpse of "dear sister Joanna," as Sir Walter Scott called Miss Baillie, at this time ; twenty years after, we were so intimate with her in her beautiful old age. Mrs Barbauld says :—"I have

Joanna  
Baillie.

received great pleasure from the representation of 'De Montfort,' a tragedy in a volume called 'Plays on the Passions.' I little dreamed I was indebted for my entertainment to a young lady whom I visited, and who came to Mr Barbauld's meeting with as innocent a face as if she had not written a line."

Destruction of the Bastille.

The terrible French Revolution was then raging. In another letter she says :—"We were much gratified by seeing Lord Daer, who had been at Paris and seen the demolition of the Bastille, and with hundreds more ranged through that till now impregnable Castle of Giant Despair. He told us that after all the prisoners in the common apartments had been liberated, they heard for a long time the groans of a man in one of the dungeons, to which they could not get access, and were at length obliged to take him out by making a breach in the wall, through which they drew him out after he had been forty-eight hours without food ; and they could not at last find the aperture by which he was put into the dungeon."

Lord Daer. Lord Daer, the eldest son of the Earl of Selkirk, was a favourite pupil of Mrs Barbauld. She says :—"We have had a visit from Lord Daer ; he spent a fortnight with us (at Hampstead). We had the great pleasure of seeing him quite stout and in full health. He was before the finest boy ; he is now the finest young man I know. His visit gave us very sensible pleasure as a mark of affectionate attachment." They soon had to mourn over this dear young friend, who died of consumption in the prime of life.



In another letter she speaks of the books she had been reading :—"I am reading with a great deal of interest Ramsay's 'History of the American Revolution,' and I do not wonder that the old story of Greece and Rome grows, as you say, flat, when we have events of such importance passing before our eyes ; and from thence acquiring a warmth of colour and authenticity which it is in vain to seek for in histories that have passed from hand to hand through a series of ages. How uniformly great was Congress, and what a spotless character Washington !

"We are reading in idle moments a very different <sup>Dr Johnson.</sup> work—Boswell's long expected 'Life of Johnson.' It is like going to Ranelagh—you meet all your acquaintance ; but it is a base and a mean thing to bring thus every idle word into judgment. Johnson, I think, was far from a great character ; he was continually sinning against his conscience, and then afraid of going to hell for it. A Christian and a man of the town, a Philosopher and a Bigot, acknowledging life to be miserable, and making it more miserable through fear of death ; professing great distaste to the country, and neglecting the urbanity of towns ; a Jacobite and pensioned ; acknowledged to be a giant in literature, and yet we do not trace him as we do Locke or Rousseau or Voltaire in his influence on the opinions of the times. We cannot say Johnson first opened this vein of thought—led the way to this discovery. In his style he is original, and there we can track his imitators. In short, he rather seems to

me to be one of those who have shone in the *belles lettres* rather than what he is held out by many to be an original and deep genius in investigation."

She goes on to say, "I have seen two plays lately, in one Mrs Jordan and Miss Farren, in the other Mrs Siddons, who seems to me to possess all her powers, and to be likely to entertain us for years to come; but there was not another good actor in the play."

Mr Barbauld diligently kept a diary at this time, but with the bare mention of facts. One page would record calls from Dr Parr, Mrs Opie, Mr Hobhouse, Lord Selkirk, Fuseli, Sir J. Mackintosh, Mr Tom Denman,—with '*I spilt the ink*,' '*I had my hair cut*,' &c. One would have liked a few remarks from the bright visitors instead of these small facts.

Remove to  
Newington.

Mr and Mrs Barbauld remained at Hampstead about five years, when Dr Aikin's illness having obliged him to leave London for Stoke Newington, his sister could not resist the wish of her heart to be near him once more, especially as her husband's state gave all his friends great uneasiness. She prevailed upon him, therefore, to purchase a house close to her brother's, where she remained the rest of her life, though, no doubt, she must have given a sigh to pretty Hampstead and all her good friends there. Among the most intimate of these were Mr Hoare, the Miss Baillies, and Mr and Mrs Carr. Lucy Aikin writes:—

"On Thursday arrived an invitation from the Carrs

to my father and my aunt, to dine with them to meet Sir Walter Scott. Well, nothing could persuade my father to go, so my aunt said she would take me instead. A charming day we had. I did not, indeed, see much of the great lion, for we were fourteen at dinner, of whom about half were constantly talking, but he was delighted to see my aunt, and paid her great attention. . . . I heard him tell a story or two with a dry kind of humour for which he is distinguished, and though he speaks very broad Scotch, and is a heavy looking man, I was much pleased with him; he is lively, spirited, and quite above all affectation. He had with him his daughter, a girl of fifteen—the most naive child of nature I ever saw. Her little Scotch phrases charmed us all, and her Scotch songs still more. Her father is a happy minstrel to have such a lassie to sing old ballads to him, which she often does by the hour together, for he is not satisfied with a verse or two, but chooses to have *fit* the first, second, and third. He made her sing a ditty about a border *reiver* who was to be hanged for stealing the Bishop's mare, and who dies with an injunction to his comrades—

“ ‘If e'er ye find the bishop's cloak,  
Ye'll mak it shorter by the hood.’ ”

“She also sung us a lullaby in Gaelic,—very striking novelties both in a polished London party. Nobody could help calling this charming girl pretty, though all allowed her features were not good, and we thought her not unlike her father's own sweet Ellen. I had the good fortune to be placed at dinner between

Mr Whishaw and Sotheby. He is a lively, pleasant, elderly man; his manners of the old school of gallantry, which we women must ever like. A lady next him asked him if he did not think we could see by Mr Scott's countenance, if Waverley were mentioned, whether he were the author. 'I don't know,' said Mr S.; 'we will try.' So he called out from the bottom of the table to the top, 'Mr Scott, I have heard there is a new novel coming out by the author of Waverley; have you heard of it?' 'I have,' said the minstrel, 'and I believe it.' He answered very steadily, and everybody cried out, 'O, I am glad of it.' 'Yes,' said Mr Whishaw, 'I am a great admirer of those novels;' and we began to discuss which was the best of the two, but Scott kept out of this debate, and had not the assurance to say any handsome things of the works, though *he* is not the author—O no! for he denies them."

Mr Carr, at whose house this agreeable party took place, was solicitor to the Excise, and had a delightful house in Frogna. My aunt found his friendship and legal advice very valuable on many occasions. She was much attached to his whole large family. The eldest daughter, afterwards married to Dr Lushington, was a special favourite. The two youngest daughters were about my age, and I knew them in after times. One married Sir Culling Eardley; the other, Mr Roffe, a Chancery barrister, who became Lord Chancellor. Lady Cranworth did not long enjoy her dignities—she died quite young. She was very amiable and lovely.

## CHAPTER VII.

Norwich—William Taylor—Taylor Family—Martineau Family—Mrs Opie—Charles Lamb—Southey—Coleridge—Wordsworth—Funeral of Lord Nelson—Godwin—Mrs Shelley.

THE city of Norwich was at one time inhabited by Norwich. a set of clever and remarkable people, with whom my family were very intimate. One or two, as Dr Enfield and Dr Taylor, had been tutors at the old Warrington Academy, where I suppose their friendship with the Aikins began; and William Taylor had been a pupil of Mrs Barbauld's at Palgrave. He called her the "mother of his mind," and always spoke of her with gratitude and affection. My aunt, Lucy Aikin, says : —"During his meridian, about ten years of the last century and fifteen or twenty of this, Norwich contained within its walls a lettered and accomplished circle, capable of appreciating his genius, and he was constantly attended by a band of admiring disciples. His conversation was inexpressibly attractive. The peculiarity of his diction, interspersed with words of his own coinage, added to the zest of his sayings. Of his profound knowledge of the English tongue, he has raised an enduring monument in his 'Synonymes,' a work which cannot be too diligently perused by the student of English. When his acquaintance with German began, there was no translation of any German author which had not been

William  
Taylor.

made through the medium of French, and he was probably the first Englishman of letters to read the great authors in the originals. He published a survey of German literature, and in a separate volume, 'Nathan the Wise,' and that graceful and interesting drama, 'Iphigenia in Tauris,' in blank verse, of the most finished beauty."

A remarkable anecdote belongs to his version of "Bürger's Leonora," which I heard from the lips of Sir Walter Scott himself as he was relating it to Mrs Barbauld. After reminding her that long before the ballad was printed, she had carried it with her to Edinburgh, and read it to Dugald Stewart, "he," said Scott, "repeated all he could remember of it to me, and this, madam, was what made me a poet. I had several times attempted the more regular kinds of poetry without success, but here was something I thought I could do."

Sir James Mackintosh in one of his letters from Bombay, says:—"I can still trace William Taylor by his Armenian dress gliding through the crowd in Reviews, Magazines, &c., rousing the stupid public by paradox, or correcting it by seasonable truth. It is true that he does not speak the Armenian or any language but the Tylorian, but I am so fond of his vigour and originality, that for his sake I have studied and learnt the language."

Taylor  
Family.

The large family of Taylors (no relation of W. T., however) were dear friends of ours. Mrs John Taylor was the valued correspondent of my Aunt Barbauld to the end of her life. She had many clever sons, and her

daughter, Mrs Austin, as well as *her* daughter, Lady Duff Gordon, were well known in the literary world of London. With the family of Mr John Taylor, our neighbours, first in the city and afterwards when the Taylors as well as ourselves moved westward, my sister and I were very intimate. Like all their family they were very musical. One evening we met there a very young man of Jewish appearance, small and slight, with a pale face, with fine dark eyes, and curling black hair. He sat down to the piano, and played very beautifully a piece he had himself composed for Susan Taylor.

His name was Felix Mendelssohn!

The family of Martineau was as numerous as that of the Taylors, to whom I believe they were related. Dr James Martineau and his sister Harriet are names now known to every one. I must not forget Dr Enfield, whom I never saw, who was perhaps more loved by my relations than any one out of their own family. He was the author of many valuable works, and joined my grandfather in his "General Biography."

There is frequent mention in the old letters also of Mrs Opie. Dr Alderson and his charming daughter. She early began to write poetry, which she submitted to Dr Aikin for his criticism. He says in a letter to Mrs Barbauld:—" 'The Virgin's First Love' is indeed a very pretty idea, and in some parts beautifully worked up; but I want a *finished piece* from this clever lass. I want her to hold her pen awhile from her paper, and study, instead of pouring out the first thoughts or expressions that offer. The present state of poetry

will not excuse imperfect lines, stiff and feeble expressions, tautologies, &c., with which a rapid writer must abound."

Mr Opie, R.A., whom Miss Alderson married, was a fine painter and a man of genius, but of homely and rough manners. I have heard my Aunt Lucy, who, however, much relished his society, say, that once at a morning party where Mrs Opie was charming her guests by her singing, he put his head in at the door with, "Amelia, don't sing; I cannot paint if you do," and she immediately obeyed. He would put her down flatly if he thought her in any way inaccurate, as she sometimes was. There had been a discussion as to the river Waveney—its length and depth—Mrs Opie exclaiming at last, "Well, I am sure it would come up to a man's chin." "Perhaps it might," growled her husband, "if he stood on his head."

Letter from Miss Aikin, 1817.—"I must give you an anecdote of lionising which I have just heard. Mrs Opie, who is in London, was holding one of her usual Sunday morning levees, when up comes her footman, much ruffled, to tell her that a man in a smock-frock was below, who wanted to speak to her, would take no denial, could not be got away. Down she goes to investigate the matter. The rustic advances, nothing abashed. 'I am James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd.' The poet is had up to the drawing-room, smock-frock and all, and introduced to everybody. Presently he pulls out a paper, some verses which he had written that morning, and would



read, if agreeable. With a horrible Scotch accent, and charity-boy twang, he got through some staves, nobody understanding a line. 'Mr Hogg,' says Mrs Opie, 'I think if you will excuse me, I could do more justice to your verses than yourself;' so takes them from him, and with her charming delivery causes them to be voted very pretty. On inquiring, it is found that the shepherd is on a visit to Lady Cork, the great patroness of lions; is exhibited, and has doubtless merited this illustrious protection, by exchanging for an habiliment so sweetly rustic, the new green coat, pink waistcoat, and fustian small clothes, in which such a worthy would naturally make a début in the great city."

Mrs Opie's conversion to the creed and dress of the Quakers took place after her husband's death. The only time I ever saw her was in this garb—a striking figure, with a sweet bright countenance.

In the beginning of this century the singular and original genius of Charles Lamb began to attract notice in the literary circles. My relations, were among the first to recognise it, though their doing so excited the surprise of our friend Mr Robinson. He says in his diary :—

Charles  
Lamb.

"A call on the Aikins. The whole family full of their praises of Charles Lamb. The doctor termed him a brilliant writer. The union of so much eloquence with so much wit shows great powers of mind. Miss Aikin was not less warm in her praise. She asked why he did not write more. I mentioned as

one cause, the bad character given him by the reviewers.

"I then spoke of the *Annual Review* (Arthur Aikin, the editor, was present), as having hurt him much by its notice of 'John Woodvil.' She exclaimed, 'Oh that Tommy! that such a fellow should criticise such a man as Lamb!' I then mentioned that some persons had attributed that article to Mrs Barbauld. I was impressed with the sincerity and liberality of the Aikins in acknowledging a merit so unlike their own. They evinced a universality of taste which I had not supposed them to possess."

Mr Robinson soon after writes :—

"Went to Mrs Barbauld's, where I was soon joined by Charles and Mary Lamb. This was a meeting I had brought about to gratify mutual curiosity. The Lambs are pleased with Mrs Barbauld, and therefore it is probable that they have pleased her.

Mrs C. Aikin was there, and Miss Lawrence. Lamb was chatty, and suited his conversation to his company; except that speaking of Gilbert Wakefield, he said he had a peevish face. When he was told Mrs Aikin was Gilbert Wakefield's daughter he was vexed, but got out of the scrape tolerably well. I walked with the Lambs to the turnpike, and then came home."

Southey.

Mr Robinson also speaks of dining at Dr Aikin's to meet Southey. I was too young to remember seeing him, but often heard my relations talk of the pleasure and affection they felt for the young poet, who was a constant visitor whenever he was in town.

When he changed his political opinions, however, he at once entirely dropped their friendship, never once either visiting or writing to them again.

Of his great brother poet, Coleridge, I am happy Coleridge. to have some personal recollection.

In a letter from my mother before her marriage to her friend Lucy Aikin, dated Gateacre, near Liverpool, 1804, she says, after speaking of the delightful society she was among at Mr Roscoe's and other friends:—"Whilst I was there we were unexpectedly gratified by the company of Mr Coleridge for several days. I passed a week with him there once before, and was highly delighted, but we think him *if possible* improved since then in everything but his state of health, which is very bad indeed, and I fancy he is at this time in London, looking out for a companion to Madeira, a short residence at which place, he thinks, would completely restore him."

Many years after this was written, I had my first sight of the man my mother so much admired in her youth. My aunt Lucy Aikin had taken me with her to call on her friend Lady Heygate, at the Mansion House, she being Lady Mayoress. On the staircase, going out, we met a tall stout man, with thick white hair and fine dark eyes. He bowed and just spoke to my aunt, and she told me he was the poet Coleridge.

My next meeting with him was more satisfactory. My sister and myself, young girls, were on a visit to our good friends, Sir William and Lady Domville;

they lived at Highgate, close to Mr Gillman's, where Coleridge lived. One evening we were all asked to tea there. No one but the family were present. Mr Coleridge was then giving a course of lectures on "The female characters of Shakespeare." He had delivered one that day, and his mind being full of the subject, he was easily led to it by Sir William, and began speaking without any break for more than an hour, giving us, I suppose, the whole of the lecture, all of us listening with wrapt attention to his wonderful eloquence.

Wordsworth.

Mr Robinson's own particular poet Wordsworth I never saw but once at a party at Mr Hoare's, at Hampstead. He was suffering from the toothache, and sat almost silent in a corner of the room, which was provoking. Mrs Wordsworth seemed very charming. I was too young to remember Mr Robinson's bringing Wordsworth to a party at my father's, at which were James Montgomery, Miss Jane Porter, Mr Roscoe, &c.

Mr Wordsworth wrote to his friend two days after : — "I have never been well since, but I am content to pay this price for the knowledge of so pleasing a person as Mrs Charles Aikin, being quite an enthusiast when I find a woman whose countenance and manners are what a woman's should be."


Funeral of Lord Nelson.

A letter from my Aunt Lucy in 1806 describes, among other things, the funeral of Lord Nelson.

"I went with my friend Mrs Carr to a dinner at Hopner's, who has more wit than almost any one.

There were Rogers and Moore, who told us some Irish stories with infinite humour. In the afternoon came the Opies. Presently Mrs Opie and Moore sat down to the instrument; Mrs Opie was not in voice, but Anacreon! upon my word, he gave me new ideas of the power of harmony. He sang us some of his own sweet little songs, set to his own music, rendered doubly touching by a voice the most sweet, an utterance the most articulate, and expression the most deep and varied that I ever witnessed. No wonder this little man is a pet with duchesses.

"As I was determined 'to exert my energies,' I accompanied my friends on board Mr W. Carr's ship, whence we saw the body of Nelson carried in procession up the river. The ships with their lowered flags, the dark boats of the river fencibles, the magnificent barges of his Majesty, and the city companies, and above all the mournful notes of distant music, and the deep sound of the minute gun, the smoke of which floated heavily along the surface of the river, conspired to form a solemn, sober, and appropriate pomp, which I found awfully affecting. It did but increase my eagerness to witness the closing scenes the next day at St Paul's. You have had an account of our adventures on that occasion, and the order of procession you would see in the papers. But perhaps you might not attend to a circumstance which struck me most forcibly—the union of all ranks, from the heir apparent to the common sailor, in doing honour to the departed hero. In fact, the royal band of



brothers, with their stately figures, splendid uniforms, and sober majestic deportment, roused even in me a transient emotion of loyalty. But when the noble Highlanders and other regiments marched in, who vanquished Bonaparte's Invincibles in Egypt, and, reversing their arms, stood hiding their faces, with every mark of heartfelt sorrow, and especially when the victorious captains of Trafalgar showed their weather-beaten and undaunted fronts, following the bier in silent mournful state, and when at length the gallant tars appeared bearing in their hands the tattered and blood-stained colours of the "Victory," and I saw one of the poor fellows wiping his eyes by stealth on the end of the flag he was holding up,—I cannot express to you all the proud, heroic, patriot feelings that took possession of my heart, and made tears a privilege and a luxury."

Godwin. In one of my rambles with my father in my childish days he took me to a bookseller's shop, somewhere near Holborn, in which was a little old man with a clever, striking countenance, and polite, almost cringing manners. This was the celebrated William Godwin, whose political writings were producing great excitement. There was nothing alarming in his voice or manner, however; both were gentle. He entered into an animated conversation with my father, which I wish I could recall. I knew nothing of "Political Justice," but was very glad to see the writer, as I was told, of some favourite little books of mine, published in the name of "Edward Bald-

win," as he did not venture to put his own too well-known name to them.

Mr Godwin was the husband of the celebrated <sup>Mrs Shel-</sup> Mary Wollstonecraft, and father of the future Mrs Shelley. The ladies of my family, though great admirers of Mrs Godwin's writings, were too correct in their conduct to visit her, and the same objection was felt to Mrs Shelley. When, many years after this time, my Aunt Lucy was at a large party at Mrs Daniel Gaskell's, a lady who liked to collect every kind of lion in her rooms, she brought up Mrs Shelley to introduce her to my aunt, thinking no doubt to give a mutual pleasure, my aunt, however, resolutely turned her back on the fair widow, much to Mrs Gaskell's dismay, and to the surprise of my brother, a very young man, who had escorted his aunt to the party, and was himself enchanted with Mrs Shelley's beauty and manners.

## CHAPTER VIII.

James Montgomery.

Jas. Mont- IN the year 1806 Dr Aikin received the following  
gomery. letter, which led to a correspondence which lasted many years, and was continued by my aunt after her father's death. Mr Montgomery also paid several visits to Newington, but I never was so fortunate as to see him, though I was very early made familiar with his charming little poems and hymns.

"To John Aikin, M.D.

"SIR,—Miss Wakefield, who is at present in this neighbourhood, informs me that I am indebted to you for the elegant verses addressed to me in the last *Monthly Magazine*. Indeed, sir, I am as sensible to the sweetness of commendation as any man living, and know how to value it according to the authority from which it comes. But I have not skill in paying compliments, and if I had, on the present occasion I would not attempt to lessen my obligation to you by returning praises, where I am sure that simple thanks must be more acceptable. I acknowledge myself your debtor, and I am content to remain so. I cannot offer you a more ingenuous pledge of my gratitude for your unexpected kindness.




"There are so few of those who have ever deservedly obtained reputation for pure and exquisitely discerning taste who dare boldly and broadly to declare their approbation of a new poem, by an obscure author, till they have felt each other's pulses, or till they hear the wind of public favour rising, that your generous and manly conduct towards me, in this instance, has deeply affected me, and I will endeavour to justify the opinion which you have so courageously hazarded, without waiting, as many a prudent critic would have done, to hear what all the world would say about me first. But as I only write to return you thanks, I beg pardon for doing more.—I am, very respectfully, your obliged humble servant, "J. MONTGOMERY."

"SHEFFIELD, *March 5th*, 1806."

As the name of James Montgomery is perhaps fading from the knowledge of the present generation, it may be as well to recall some of the circumstances of his life. He was born in the year 1771 in Scotland. His father belonged to the singular sect of the Moravians, who lived in a kind of monastic establishments, the wives of the young men being chosen for them by lot.

The father of Montgomery having gone as a missionary to the West Indies, the boy was left at the Moravian school at Fulneck in Yorkshire. The bent of his mind towards poetry and literature began here to show itself, and he wrote a volume of religious poetry before the age of fourteen. The worthy



fathers of the academy becoming alarmed at these flights, and giving up all hopes of his settling down as a minister, placed him in trade with one of their sect at Wakefield. Finding this situation quite uncongenial he absconded, and threw himself upon the world at sixteen, with the wild and vain hopes of making a career for himself. The natural consequences followed, and he was compelled by distress to return to his master, who received him kindly, and in the end he joined the editor of a Sheffield paper, of which he became in due time the proprietor himself. This was in the evil times for liberal opinions, in which my family suffered so severely. An ode, written by a clergyman, on the destruction of the Bastille, which had been sung openly, and had appeared in half the newspapers in the kingdom, found its way into the *Sheffield Iris*. Montgomery was tried, found guilty, and sentenced to a fine and three months' imprisonment in York Castle. On his liberation he found his newspaper well cared for by a friend, and himself warmly welcomed. But he had hardly resumed his work when two men were killed in a riot in Sheffield by the soldiery. He gave a correct account of the circumstance, but the volunteer officer, who was also a magistrate, feeling his dignity hurt by the statement, preferred a bill of indictment against him. The defence justified the truth of the statement on very satisfactory testimony ; but in vain, Montgomery was found guilty, and again fined and imprisoned for six months.

During this confinement he began writing poetry, which he continued to do for many years, with a success as unexpected to him as it was delightful. I add one more of his letters to my grandfather :—

“SHEFFIELD, *May 22, 1819.*

“DEAR SIR,—I meant to have accompanied my thanks for your last kind, forgiving letter, with a copy of ‘Greenland.’ The latter, however, I hope you have received ere now. I was truly glad to learn that your mind towards me was unchanged during the interval of our correspondence ; for to have lost your esteem, however unworthy I otherwise may have been of it, would have been indeed a mortification more severe than my offence of apparent neglect would have deserved. The publication of one more volume of poetry brings home to my bosom the remembrance of the time and the circumstances when you first befriended me, and finding me in the shadow, led me forth by the hand into the light, giving me at least what I might not otherwise have obtained—the opportunity of being seen and distinguished, if I had power to command and keep my measure of public admiration. That I desired the latter then, though I almost despaired of obtaining it, I am not ashamed to confess, nor am I now indifferent to it, however my feelings and views in many respects may have been altered, in the various and afflictive experience of fifteen years. Whether I have equalled your hopes and expectations is of little consequence to either of

us; your estimate of my talents, and my proof of their power, as far as regards their influence on the public mind, having been long ago fixed—probably in both cases pretty near the truth. Among my contemporaries I have found my level; how many of us may go down to posterity, and how we shall be arranged in the temple of Fame (if we ever find niches there) is far beyond my sagacity to imagine. If every generation adds as much to the stock of poetry as the present has done, we shall be smothered with multitude, and in less than a thousand years, if our names only be remembered with the titles of our works, they will furnish a library of catalogues of all ‘such reading as is never read.’ I am aware of many disadvantages under which I appear as a poet; some of these are personal, others accidental, and some I have deliberately chosen. I have neither written for fame or profit solely, and if in both I have fallen below the romantic expectations of my childhood, my vanity is yet flattered more than it ought to be, in the reflection that I have sacrificed a portion of both for what was of more value to me. But I must check myself, or I shall confess all my secret faults before you, and show what indeed you may know by intuition, that I am as weak and selfish as any of the tribe, however meekly I may seem to bear my faculties. I am very differently situated from what I was when you first noticed me. I was then awaking out of a long torpor of indolence and despondency; I am now almost sinking under the burthen of labours and anxieties of

mind and heart, at a time when bodily infirmities are yearly increasing, and I sometimes think that I am wearing away like a locked wheel rapidly descending a hill, grinding below, and firing at the axle. External affairs, too, as I told you in my last, have exceedingly troubled me, though, as far as immediately concerned myself, I have been generally prosperous; the misfortunes of others connected with me have been my heaviest trials. It struck me, after I had written to you last, that I had, among all my complaints, omitted the worst, and that under which I was peculiarly suffering at the very time. To relieve myself of some of the cares of business, and secure more leisure for my other numerous engagements, at the beginning of 1817 I took a partner in the newspaper. In little more than eighteen months he contrived to spend all he brought, and then left me. This of course threw me into great difficulties, which have been prolonged by the failure of a negociation of another candidate for partnership, and I am yet alone, and mean to remain so. It was this circumstance, with much ill-health, which compelled me to break off 'Greenland' in the middle, without any prospect, even if this part should be successful, which I know to be very hazardous, of returning soon to the subject.

"With kindest remembrance to all your dear and honoured family, I am, your obliged friend,

"JAMES MONTGOMERY."




## CHAPTER IX.

Waterloo—Allied sovereigns' visit to London—Princess Charlotte—William IV. at the Tower in state—Society of Arts—Duke of Sussex.

Waterloo. I CAN just recollect the rejoicings for the peace after the battle of Waterloo, though I must have been very little, as I was carried on my Uncle Arthur's shoulder about the streets to see the illuminations at night. It was long before the invention of gas, but I think the rich colours of the lamps were more beautiful, at least to a child. Every one seemed wild with joy at that time, and the names of everything were changed for Waterloo and Wellington whenever it was possible. The grand bridge was opened, and the universal colour was Waterloo blue, down to my little new shoes.

My mother's second brother, Gilbert Wakefield, returned with the troops, to the delight of his widowed mother and the rest of his family. He had gone, at sixteen, at once to Spain with his regiment, and had been in nearly all the terrible engagements in the Peninsula, escaping without a wound, though a bullet passed through his cap, and another through his boot. He was a fine young man, very amiable and good-tempered, and a good scholar. He was offered a clerkship in the War Office by his father's faithful friend, the Hon. C. J. Fox, but nothing would con-



tent him but soldiering. I remember my grandmother's anxieties when the news of a battle arrived—they had then to wait perhaps weeks before the list of the killed and wounded could be made out.

The allied sovereigns came to London soon after. I saw from a window the Emperor Alexander, the King of Prussia, and our Prince Regent go into St Paul's to return thanks. I remember all their faces distinctly.

Allied  
sovereigns'  
visit to  
London.

The next public event was one of universal sadness—the death of the young heiress of the throne, the Princess Charlotte, at the birth of her first child. The mourning was quite general in all classes. The first black ribbons I ever wore were for her.

Princess  
Charlotte.

Her father, George IV., was so unpopular, that all kinds of stories of his cruelty to her were in circulation—many of them untrue, no doubt; but it was a fact that her mother was not permitted to come to her in her hour of peril, and that none of the ladies about her had been a mother.

After the death of her father, George IV., his next brother came to the throne as William IV. The late king had lived so secluded a life that the people were delighted when his successor appeared ready and happy to go about with his queen, who was said to be most gracious and amiable.

William  
IV. at the  
Tower in  
state.

I was visiting some relations in the country, when my father and sister were invited to see a ceremony in the Tower, by some of the civil officers of the



garrison, friends of ours. It is to be remembered that there were no telegrams, photographs, or illustrated papers in those days—very few of any newspapers, and those few only gave the shortest and driest of accounts of public events. This letter of my sister's, a lively young girl, was therefore read with the greatest interest by all our friends in the remote country town where I received it.

“ . . . . Last Thursday we had a great treat. Mr Dyson asked papa to bring a party of ladies to the Tower to see the royal family, who were going there in state. Accordingly he invited the smartest and handsomest ladies he knew—Mrs Lowndes and Aunt Henry (Wakefield). I told him the choice did honour to his taste. We got to the Tower by half-past nine, and with some difficulty made our way to Mr Dyson's house, overlooking the terrace where the King was to review the troops—a capital place for seeing. However, papa got an order for two of us to go into the small armoury, which is just opposite the White Tower, against which was placed a platform for the Queen and ladies. Mrs L. and I with some difficulty got a place at one of the windows. About eleven arrived two state carriages and six, and one carriage and four, containing the King, Queen, Duke of Sussex, Prince George of Cumberland, Frederic of Prussia, Prince Leopold, Duchess of Cumberland, and two or three dowdy old ladies, whom I took to be the princesses. The King, Duke of S., and Prince Leopold were in Field Marshal's



uniforms—the last looked very handsome, but the two others quite ridiculous. The King is a little, old, red-nosed, weather-beaten, jolly-looking person, with an ungraceful air and carriage; and as to the Duke, what with his stiff collar, immense black whiskers, and cocked hat bobbing over his face, nothing could be seen of him but his nose. He seemed quite overcome with heat, and went along puffing and panting with the great fat Duchess of Cumberland leaning on his arm.

“I was not prepared to see a beauty in the Queen, but she is even worse than I thought—a little insignificant person as ever I saw. She was dressed—as perhaps you will see by the papers, ‘exceedingly plain’—in bombazine, with a little shabby muslin collar, *died* leghorn hat, and *leather* shoes. Prince George is a lovely boy in uniform as colonel of Hussars. He stood by the King, and saluted the officers as they passed before them. The Duke of Wellington, as Governor of the Tower, received them. The first thing they did was to review the soldiers. The King walked all round them, and the officers stood all in a row, and kissed hands, a most ridiculous sight. They had a salute of cannon, which, together with the band, the officers roaring to the men, and the people cheering, made the most horrible noise I ever heard, but the King and Queen seemed to enjoy it, and kept nodding to the people as if they had known them a hundred years.

“Then they had a collation in Tippoo’s tent, and

afterwards went into the small armoury, where we all were. They passed us three times, so close as to squeeze us against the wall, and they bowed to us, and we to them, and seemed quite good friends. The King, to our surprise, had changed his dress for an admiral's uniform, in which he looked much better ; but I suppose beauty is out of fashion, for an uglier set of people I never saw, both men and women. There were heaps of frightful old officers loaded with decorations, many of them German, as I guessed by their v's and w's. Altogether, it was a most gay sight, and I enjoyed it greatly."

Every summer in our young days was enlivened by a journey with my dear uncle to some beautiful place in England or Wales ; and in town hardly a week ever passed after he left our family without our paying him a visit in his house in the Adelphi, which joined that of the Society of Arts. We saw all the London sights, or went to the play, or, if fine weather, took a row either up or down the river in those little boats, which I believe the steamers have now made unsafe.


There were no steamers anywhere in those days, and only three bridges over the Thames between London and Westminster, till the building of Waterloo Bridge. I can just remember the pulling down of old London Bridge, with all its arches of a different size and shape. My grandmother has told me that in the days of her youth she remembered houses upon London Bridge. They were pulled down on account of the evil reputation they had acquired by the

facilities they offered for getting rid of unfortunate babies who were either a burden or a scandal to their parents. Mrs Aikin also remembered all the shops having signs instead of names over their doors.

The house of the Society of Arts, which communi-  
cated with my uncle's by a door on the staircase, was  
very interesting to us children. We were allowed to  
roam about in it whenever there were no meetings of  
members. The housekeeper, a kind clever women,  
who had been born in the place, was as indulgent to  
us as my uncle, and was liked and respected by all,  
from the President, the Duke of Sussex, to the  
humblest official. Society of  
Arts.

The walls of the large room where the meetings were held were painted by the great artist, James Barry, in life size figures, representing the victors of Olympia, Elysium, and other subjects, all vividly impressed upon my mind, though I have not seen them for forty years.

The annual distribution of prizes was very amusing to us. It took place either in the Free Mason's Hall, or in one of the large theatres. I do not know where it is now held. My uncle used to find us good places near the chair before he went to the entrance with several gentlemen to wait the arrival of the Duke. Duke of  
Sussex. Soon we heard from a distance, "God save the King" played, and saw through the crowd the Duke's head bowing right and left. Like all the sons of George III. (with the sole exception of King William), he was above six feet high, and stout in proportion.



My uncle stood close beside him when he had taken his seat, answering innumerable questions from him. The Duke performed his part admirably, giving every one of the candidates who came up before him, on their names being read, a kind smile, or a genial and well-chosen word or two.

After his death Prince Albert became President of the Society, which was a sad change from the kind old Duke. Though perfectly handsome and polite, the prince at that time spoke English with evident difficulty, and was cold and stiff in his manner. He afterwards became a fluent and excellent speaker.

The Duke of Sussex showed a great regard for my uncle, often inviting him to dinner and to his scientific parties, and to long interviews in the mornings, when he became very confidential. He was extremely liberal in his religion as well as his politics, and had portraits of several Unitarians in his library. He generally turned the conversation to theology, and when he heard that my aunt, Lucy Aikin, was in correspondence with Dr Channing, he sent through her many messages and books to their American friend.

## CHAPTER X.

Edgeworth Family—Friendship with Mrs Barbauld—Letter from Miss Edgeworth  
Frank Edgeworth—Miss Edgeworth's Novels—George Dyer—Mrs Gilbert  
Wakefield and George Dyer.

IN the life of Mr Edgeworth, published by his daughter after his death, is the following passage:—  
“Among the friends he found during this summer (1799) in England, and in consequence of the publication of his sentiments on education, was Mrs Barbauld. Her writings he had long admired for their classical strength and elegance, for their high and true tone of moral and religious feeling, and for their practically useful tendency.”

“She gratified him by accepting an invitation to pass some time with us at Clifton; and ever afterwards, though at a great distance from each other, her constant friendship for him was a source of great pleasure and just pride.”

The friendship thus pleasantly begun continued to the end of Mrs Barbauld's life, and a correspondence was kept up at intervals. I have it before me now, torn and yellow with age. The first letter, dated 1799, on a sheet of foolscap, is begun by Mr Edgeworth and finished by Maria. They often tried in vain to tempt my aunt to visit them in Ireland. Miss Edgeworth says:—

Letter  
from Miss  
Edge-  
worth.

"I wish I could transport you into this large cheerful family, where everybody, from little Pakenham, at four years old, to the old housekeeper, 'eldest of forms,' would do everything in their power to make you quite at home."

They sent her all their works as they appeared, and it was one of the happiest events of my childhood when a charming new "Frank" or "Rosamond" was handed over to our little bookcase. Indeed, except Miss Edgeworth and our own "Evenings at Home," "Sandford and Merton," and one or two others, we had no children's books. Unlike the children of the present day, who expect a constant supply of little novels, splendidly bound, and illustrated by the best artists, our little books were clothed in the plainest paper covers, with hardly ever an illustration, with, indeed, one exception, a translation by Mary Wollstonecraft of a German work, the text quaint and foreign, and full of wonderful *pictures*, which I long afterwards found out were by Blake, only lately acknowledged to be a great artist, and which fact accounted for the hold these designs kept upon my memory.

I was too young to have seen Miss Edgeworth at my aunt's; but many years after, on, I believe, her last visit to London, my father and myself (a young girl) were invited to spend an evening at their lodgings. Maria was unfortunately from home, but her sweet-looking stepmother and two sisters received us most kindly, and gave us a cordial invitation to Edge-

worthstown. Madame D'Arblay's only son, a fine handsome young man, was of the party. Many years later we had the pleasure of seeing the youngest son, Mr Frank Edgeworth. He had in some way heard of the sacrifice made by my husband's father in giving up a deanery, *almost* hereditary in his family, for conscientious scruples on the Church articles. Frank Edgeworth, having experienced the same difficulty, and given up the church for which he was intended, was very anxious, we were told, to meet my father-in-law, which he did at our house; and we had a pleasant and friendly meeting.

He had married a Spanish lady, a refugee, who died after the birth of several children; and his elder brothers having also died, he became heir to the estate, and returned to live with his mother at Edgeworthstown, and soon after died himself.

He was the intimate friend of John Sterling; and Carlyle has given of him in the *Life* one of his strong but exaggerated pictures:—

"Frank Edgeworth, youngest brother of the celebrated Maria Edgeworth, the Irish novelist. Frank was a short, neat man, of sleek, square, colourless face, with small blue eyes, in which twinkled curiously a joyless smile. His voice was croaky and shrill. . . . He was learned in Plato, and likewise in Kant; entertained not creeds, coldly sneering away from him all manner of superstitions; for the rest a man of perfect veracity, of great diligence, and other worth."

Mr Edgeworth's name having generally appeared,



joined with his daughter's, in the title pages of her works, people felt anxious to know how great a share he had really taken in the authorship, some insinuating that it was much the larger. After Mr Edgeworth's death, however, my Aunt Lucy wrote to us :—

Miss Edgeworth's  
Novels.

“Miss Edgeworth has come to town, bringing us a new novel ('Helen'), which I hope to see excellent, were it only to prove she can stand alone.

“Mrs Joanna Baillie once got out of her that 'Rack-rent' and 'Ennui' were all her own.

“‘Very well, Maria,’ said she, ‘that is enough; I don't want to hear any more.’

“To be sure, it is the lion's share.”

After her death, my aunt says :—“She lived to see everything changed around her, but herself not forgotten by the world, to which she had been so admirable a benefactress. As a moral teacher, who was at the same time a witty, humorous, and entertaining writer, she stands unrivalled. That perfect freedom from every kind of cant—when shall we find it in any author of the present day? The purity and perfect elegance of her style were other merits rare indeed in those days of jargon and slang. When, oh when, shall we see her equal?”

George  
Dyer.

A constant visitor at our house was our old friend George Dyer, the G. D. of the “Essays of Elia.” As he was an old man when I first remember him, I will give Mr Robinson's account of his early days when they met so often at Charles Lamb's house.




"1799.—I became acquainted about this time with George Dyer. He was one of the best creatures that ever breathed. He was the son of a watchman, and was put to school by some pious ladies. He afterwards went to Christ's Hospital (where he became intimate with Coleridge), and from there was sent to Cambridge. He was a scholar, but to the end of his days (and he lived to be eighty-five) was a book-seller's drudge. He led a life of literary labour in poverty. He made indexes, corrected the press, and occasionally gave lessons in Latin and Greek.

"When an undergraduate at Cambridge, he became a hearer of Robert Robinson, and consequently a Unitarian. This closed the Church against him, and he never had a Fellowship. He became intimate with the Nashs, Fordhams, and Rutt, and was patronized by Wakefield and Mrs Barbauld. He wrote one good book, 'The Life of Robert Robinson,' which I have heard Wordsworth mention as one of the best works of biography in the language. Dyer also put his name to several volumes of poetry; but on his poems my friend Reid made an epigram that I fear was thought just.

" 'The world all say, my gentle Dyer,  
Thy odes so very much want fire.  
Repair the fault, my gentle Dyer,  
And throw thy odes into the fire.'

"Dyer had the kindest heart and simplest manners possible. It was literally the case with him that h



would give away his last guinea. He was not sensible of the impropriety in wearing a dirty shirt or a ragged coat, and numerous are the tales told in illustration of his neglect of little every-day makers of comfort.

"He has asked a friend to breakfast with him, and given him coarse black tea, stale bread, salt butter, sour milk, and has had to run out to buy sugar. One day Mrs Barbauld said to me, 'Have you heard whom Lord Stanhope has made his executor?' 'No; your brother?' 'No, there would have been nothing in that; the very worst imaginable.' 'Oh, then it is Bonaparte?' 'No; guess again.' 'George Dyer?' 'You are right; Lord Stanhope was clearly insane.'

"Dyer was one of six executors; Charles James Fox was another. The executors were also residuary legatees. Dyer was one of the first to declare that he rejected the legacy and renounced the executorship. But the heir insisted on granting him a small annuity; his friends having before settled another on him, he was comparatively wealthy in his old age. Not many years before his death, he married his laundress by the advice of his friends—a very worthy woman."

Being extremely short-sighted—indeed, he became blind at last—as well as absent, he was continually doing the strangest things. At our house he once took up the coal-scuttle, thinking it was his hat, and the coals fell out in all directions. At another time he walked into the street with the footman's livery hat on his head; called twice in the day at the same

house, writing his name in the book in the hall each time.

I fear his goodness and kindness were not properly appreciated by us young ones, as he was sadly uncouth and slovenly in his appearance, and had a fatal habit of kissing us on his arrival, which we always tried to avoid. One day, hearing him come up-stairs, my sister and I ran away as usual, and peeping into the drawing-room, where we had left a bust we had been drawing from, heard him, after a low bow, entering with his usual politeness into a kind conversation with Diana.

He went very often to visit my grandmother, Mrs Wakefield, who lived at Hackney with her young sons, from whom poor Dyer patiently endured much teasing. I have heard of Gilbert's one day dressing in woman's clothes, with a mask, and was introduced as a "Foreign Lady," to whom Mr Dyer was asked to give his arm to the dining-room, which he did after gazing with blank surprise at the strange face of "the lady." It was only near the end of dinner that the trick was discovered by the whole party bursting into uncontrollable laughter.

Mrs Wakefield, who had been beautiful, and still looked very young (her husband never mentions her in his letters to her daughters but as "your lovely mother"), had been the object of Mr Dyer's humble devotion for many years, and he at last ventured to send her a proposal of marriage. My aunt has described to me her coming flushed and indignant

Mrs Gilbert Wakefield and George Dyer.

into the room with an open letter in her hand, which she flung to them, saying, "There, girls, you must answer this for me; I will have nothing to say to him."

It was long before she would forgive him or allow him to resume his visits to her house. I do not think that any man could have persuaded her to be untrue to the beloved husband of her youth (she was married to Gilbert Wakefield at seventeen), but certainly George Dyer would have been the last person to please so delicate and fastidious a lady.

## CHAPTER XI.

### Death of Mrs Barbauld.

IN the year 1825 my grandmother and my aunt, <sup>Death of Mrs Barbauld.</sup> Lucy Aikin, finding the dulness and seclusion of Stoke Newington oppressive, determined to remove to Hampstead, where they had many good friends. Their difficulty, however, was leaving Mrs Barbauld alone in her eighty-second year, living in her own house, and of course quite unequal to taking a new one. My father, thinking she might be able to come to him, proposed the plan to her, offering to remove to a pleasanter part of the town. She consented, but when his new house near Russell Square was ready, she was seized with an attack of illness, of which she died in a few days, having been removed into my grandmother's house before she had quitted it: It was best so, as my father would never have forgiven himself if he had thought that the change of all her old ways of life had hastened her end. She died quite peaceably and calmly, prepared, even anxious to go.

Her faithful friend, Mr Robinson, describes his last interview with her :—" . . . She was suffering from a severe cold, with a cough. 'I hope I shall find you better on my return.' 'Why so?' 'That seems a foolish question, health is better than illness.' 'Not

always, I do not wish to be better ; but don't mistake me, I am not at all impatient, but quite ready.'"

She died a few weeks after my leave-taking. It was her brother who wrote the couplet she might have written, which I repeat as a pious wish.

"From the banquet of Life rise a satisfied guest,  
Thank the Lord of the Feast, and in peace go to rest."

Her last letter was to Miss Edgeworth :—

"... The enigma you do me the honour to ask for will accompany this ; but I have first to find it, for though I have looked a good deal I have not yet been able to lay my hands on it. I beg to make proviso that if I should want myself to insert it in any publication I may be at liberty to do it. Tho', truly, that is not very likely, for well do I feel one faculty after another withdrawing, and the shades of evening closing fast around me, and be it so. What does life offer at past eighty (at which venerable age I arrived one day last June), and I believe you will allow that there is not much of new, of animating, of inviting, to be met with after that age. For my own part, I only find that many things I knew I have forgotten, many things I *thought* I knew I find I knew nothing about ; some things I know I have found not worth knowing, and some things I would give—oh, what would one not give—to know, are beyond human ken. Well, I believe this is what may be called prosing, and you can make much better use of your time than to read it. . . ."

The riddle was found, and gave much pleasure to

the Edgeworths. It is printed in the last part of  
"Harry and Lucy."

The riddle is as follows :—

" We are spirits all in white  
On a field as black as night,  
There we dance and sport and play  
Changing every changing day ;  
Yet with us is wisdom found  
As we move in mystic round.  
Mortal, wouldst thou know the grains  
That Ceres heaps on Libya's plains,  
Or leaves that yellow Autumn strews,  
Or the stars that Herschel views,  
Or find how many drops would drain  
The wide-scooped bosom of the main,  
Or measure central depths below,—  
Ask of us, and thou shalt know.  
With fairy feet we compass round  
The pyramid's capacious bound,  
Or step by step ambitious climb  
The cloud-capt mountain's height sublime.  
Riches though we do not use  
'Tis ours to gain, and ours to lose.  
From Araby the Blest we came  
In every land our tongue's the same ;  
And if our number you require  
Go count the bright Aonian quire.  
Wouldst thou cast a spell to find  
The track of light, the speed of wind,  
Or when the snail with creeping pace  
Shall the swelling globe embrace ;  
Mortal, ours the powerful spell ;—  
Ask of us, for we can tell.

(FIGURES ON A SLATE.)

As a small memoir which I wrote of my Aunt Barbauld in 1874, as well as a more considerable one

by Lucy Aikin, published soon after her death in 1825, have been long out of print, I give a few particulars of the early part of her life, now so long beyond the memory of even old persons.

Anna Letitia, the eldest child and only daughter of John Aikin, D.D., and Jane his wife, daughter of the Rev. John Jennings, was born at the village of Kibworth, Harcourt, in Leicestershire, on the 20th of June 1743. Her grandfather left Scotland at an early age and settled in London in business. He had three sons, of whom the eldest, John, was at first placed as clerk in a mercantile house. An ardent love of study and conscious power of intellect soon rendered the routine of the counting-house insupportable to him, and he prevailed upon an indulgent father to enter him a pupil of the Kibworth Academy, afterwards removed to Northampton.

Of this institution, by the early death of the Rev. John Jennings, Dr Doddridge had become the head, but so recently that young Aikin was his first pupil. The prosperity of his father gradually forsook him ; apparently not being so sharp as his countrymen, he allowed them to make a prey of him. In the end he gave up business, and found an asylum with his worthy son at Kibworth. A long old age it was ; he survived to the age of 92.

Among the fellow-students of his son was Mr Merivale, afterwards a dissenting minister at Exeter, whose diary is curiously illustrative of the simplicity of the age. "He and Aikin," he says, "set out from




London for the Academy on the same day. Aikin having two younger brothers to take to school, travelled by the wagon, but I did not choose it, for it would have cost half-a-guinea !” Therefore he walked by the side.

After quitting Doddridge's Academy, my great-grandfather went to the University of Aberdeen, then I believe illustrated by a school of learned and able theologians, such as Lowman and the Fordyces, who were casting off the fetters of Calvin. My grandfather settled at length in what was called low Arianism, which subsequently became, under his tuition, the system of the Warrington divines, almost without exception. That his university regarded him as an alumnus to be proud of, was evinced by its degree of D.D. conferred upon him at Warrington, not alone without solicitation but without notice. In fact to his humble and retiring temper, the distinction was actually distressing, and he would have been well pleased to shut up his diploma in a drawer, and say nothing about it to any one. He had just married, and accepted the invitation of a congregation at Market-Harborough, when an affection of the chest, ascribed to a fall, compelled him to resign his pulpit, and look to tuition as his sole resource ; and he opened a boarding-school at Kibworth, in Leicestershire. A letter to his friend Merivale explains his circumstances with a charming simplicity. Twelve pounds per annum for board, lodging and the instruction of such a man ! But he had his reward in the

attachment, the veneration, of his scholars ; in the atmosphere of respect and admiration which everywhere surrounded him ; and his gains were adequate to his humble wants, his modest wishes. He left behind him as the savings of his life, with some small additions probably on the side of his wife, about five-and-twenty hundred pounds.

It was his constant care never, even by inadvertence, to do the smallest hurt to any human creature. To this principle he gave a last token of adherence in his positive direction not to be buried within the walls of the Meeting-house, but in the open churchyard. After resigning his tutorship, shortly before his death, he calmly said that he had now nothing to do either for this world or another.

Dr and Mrs Aikin had two children, Anna Letitia, and her brother John, four years younger than herself. Her mother, a woman of sense and a gentlewoman, said that there was no alternative for a girl brought up in a boys' school, between being a prude and a hoyden. She preferred the first, rightly no doubt, if the case must be so, but it was owing to this training that Mrs Barbauld never felt at her ease in general society. In her youth, great bodily activity and a lively spirit struggled hard against the tight rein which held her. London cousins wondered at the gymnastic feats of the country lass. It was these perhaps, added to the brightness of her lilies and roses, which sunk so deep into the heart of a rich farmer of Kibworth. He followed this damsel of fifteen to War-



rington and obtained a private audience of her father. and begged his consent to make her his wife. Dr Aikin answered that his daughter was then walking in the garden, and he might go and ask her himself. With what grace the farmer pleaded his cause I know not ; but at length out of all patience at his unwelcome importunities, she ran nimbly up a tree which grew by the garden wall and let herself down into the lane beyond, leaving her suitor *planté là*. The poor man went home disconsolate. He lived and died a bachelor, Though he was never known to purchase any other book whatever, "The Works of Mrs Barbauld," splendidly bound, adorned his parlour to the end of his days.

Her conversation had a charm inexpressible, — playful wit, tempered with true feminine softness, and the gentle dignity of a high mind unwont to pour forth its hidden treasures on all demands. She observed once that she had never been placed in a situation which suited her. It was true, unless the bright years of Warrington be excepted. She had then her father, her brother, the academic body, and a crowd of admirers. But the manners of her home savoured no doubt of puritanical rigour. She and her mother, neat, punctual, strict, though of cultivated mind and polished manners, were uncongenial.

The removal of her father to Warrington as theological tutor to the newly founded college there took place when she was just fifteen. Her person is thus described at that time. "She was possessed of great beauty, distinct traces of which she retained

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to the latest period of her life. Her person was slender, her complexion exquisitely fair, with the bloom of perfect health; her features regular and elegant, and her dark blue eyes beamed with the light of wit and fancy."

As the Warrington Academy so entirely belongs to the past, I may here give a short account of it, taken chiefly from a lively and interesting sketch read by Mr Henry A. Bright of Liverpool to the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire.

"In the year 1753 the failure or decay of the several academies belonging to the English Presbyterian bodies caused no inconsiderable anxiety to the more thoughtful and earnest among the liberal dissenters. Where could those ministers be educated in theology unshackled by creed and doctrine? On none did these questions press with greater weight than on John Seddon, the young minister at Warrington. The idea of founding a new academy was never dropped until it had been carried out in action. How he worked, and wrote, and explained, and begged. He is never discouraged, though his discouragements are innumerable. He is never down-hearted, though his friends are always suggesting difficulties and prophesying evil. A circular was sent round signed by Daniel Bayley (of Manchester), John Lees, afterwards Sir Caryle Worsley, and seven others, and in June 1757 the first general meeting was held. Lord Willoughby of Parham, the last of the old Presbyterian nobility of England, was

appointed president. Sir H. Hoghton, Messrs Heywood and Percival, and other Manchester and Liverpool gentlemen subscribed to take houses in Warrington, and appoint tutors for the new academy.

"The tutors will take boarders into their houses at £15 per annum for those who had two months' vacation, and £18 for those who had no vacation. These terms are, however, exclusive of tea, washing, fire, and candles."

The tutors were Dr Taylor, of Norwich, author of the Hebrew Concordance, whose learning was so generally acknowledged that all the English and Welsh bishops and archbishops, with but four exceptions, were subscribers to the work. Mr Holt was mathematical tutor, and Dr Aikin, languages and literature, and after Dr Taylor's death, divinity; Dr Priestley, Dr Enfield, and the Rev. Gilbert Wakefield were afterwards appointed. "The tutors in my time," says Dr Priestley, "lived in the most perfect harmony. We drank tea together every Saturday, and our conversation was equally instructive and pleasing; we were all Arians, and the only subject on which we differed respected the doctrine of the Atonement, on which Dr Aikin held some obscure notions."

In the letter of invitation from Mr Seddon to Dr Aikin at Kibworth, one passage is curious, as showing what travelling was in England a hundred years ago. "Mr Holland has given us some reason to hope y<sup>t</sup> you will come over to Warrington in the Easter

week, in order to take a view of your future situation; if so, give me leave to recommend y<sup>e</sup> following plan. I'll suppose you set out from Kibworth on Sunday afternoon; as you intend travelling in post-chaises, you'll easily reach Loughborough, or perhaps Derby, that night, y<sup>e</sup> next night you may come to Offerton, which is about a mile short of Stockport, where I am with Mrs Seddon, and will be ready to receive you, and wait upon you to Warrington. You will do well to come prepared for riding, for you will not meet with any carriages at Stockport; nor are the roads to Warrington proper for them. When you get to a place called Bullock's Smithy, about two miles short of Stockport, enquire for Offerton. Mr Roe, late of Birmingham, now lives there, and we shall be glad to see you. If you'll write to me time eno<sup>h</sup>, and be particulars eno<sup>h</sup> in your time, I will endeavour to meet you with my own chaise, or send a servant for that purpose."

Besides the students, distinguished strangers came to Warrington to consult the tutors or visit the students. Howard the Philanthropist came in order that the younger Aikin might revise his MSS. and correct his proofs. Roscoe of Liverpool came, and first learned to care for Botany from his visits to the Warrington Botanical Gardens. Pennant, the Naturalist; Currie, the biographer of Burns; and many a Presbyterian minister, eminent then though now forgotten, were among the visitors to the Athens of our county. From difficulties in the management of this Academy,

however, and the deaths of Dr Taylor, Dr Aikin, and Mr Seddon, and the want of sufficient discipline, the hopes of the Trustees were but partially realised, and the Academy was closed in 1786, after a useful but precarious existence of nine and twenty years. A College at Manchester was established, to which the Warrington Trustees transferred their library. It then removed to York, and has now removed to London. It still retains the old Warrington characteristics of a freedom quite unshackled, a fearless daring in the cause of truth, and a clear and penetrating glance into the deepest problems of theology. An extract from a letter from Lucy Aikin to Mr Bright will close the subject. "I have often thought with envy of that Society. Neither Oxford nor Cambridge could boast of brighter names in literature or science than several of these dissenting tutors, humbly content in an obscure town, and on a scanty pittance, to cultivate in themselves and communicate to a rising generation those mental acquirements and moral habits which are their own exceeding great reward. They and theirs lived together like one large family, and in the facility of their intercourse they found large compensation for its deficiency in luxury and splendour. Such days are past ; whom have we now 'content with science in a humble shed' ?"

## CHAPTER XII.

Miss Aikin's Poems—Rochemont Barbauld—At Palgrave in Suffolk—Success of the School.

Miss  
Aikin's  
Poems.


IN 1773 the first volume of Miss Aikin's poems was published. They had an immediate success. Mrs Montagu, the Queen of London literary society, wrote a warm and flattering letter, which has been preserved.

"HILL STREET, *Feb. 22nd*, 1774.

"DEAR MADAM,—If I had not been prevented by indisposition from making my immediate acknowledgements, you would have been assured before this time of my sense of the favour done to me by your polite letter, and the great pleasure I feel in the opening a more intimate correspondence with Miss Aikin. As the world is in general too much disposed, you are certainly obliged to every man who is not jealous, and every woman who is not envious of your talents ; that I did not withhold the praise that is due to them gives me some merit with you, but that you may not overrate the obligation I will confess that I act from a perfect and long experience, that it is more to my personal happiness and advantage to indulge the love and admiration of excellence, than to cherish a secret envy of it. To this disposition I owe friend-



ships which have been the happiness and honour of my life. You must not expect to find, in me, the talents which adorn the friends around me, I shall not think myself disgraced in your opinion if you find something in me to love, tho' nothing to admire. The genuine effect of polite letters is to inspire candour, a social spirit, and gentle manners; to teach a disdain of frivolous amusements, injurious censoriousness, and foolish animosities. To partake of these advantages and to live under the benign empire of the muses, on the conditions of a Naturalized subject, who, not having any inherent right to a share of office, credit, or authority, seeks nothing but the protection of the society, is all I aim at. I am much pleased with the hope you give me of adding so valuable an ornament to my circle of Friends as Miss Aikin. I always wish to find great virtues where there are great talents, and to love what I admire, so, to tell you the truth, I made many enquiries into your character as soon as I was acquainted with your works, and it gave me infinite pleasure to find the moral character returned the lustre it received from the mental accomplishments. Your essays have made me still more intimately acquainted with the turn of your mind, more sincerely your friend, and more warmly your admirer. I dare not repeat, to you, what I have said of them to others; what might, to your modest diffidence, have the appearance of flattery would set me at a distance from your friendship to which I aspire. I hope whenever you come



to London you will come before the Spring is far advanced, for I usually leave London early in May. Bad health, and a variety of engagements make me a remiss correspondent, but I shall at any time be very happy to hear from you, and happier still if you can suggest anything I can do for your service. If any work appears in the Literary World which you would wish to have convey'd to you, favour me at any time with your commands. Your style is so classical, that I imagine that your Father's Study chiefly abounds with old books, if anything new excites your curiosity let me have the pleasure of conveying it to you. With great esteem, I am, dear madam, your most obedient and sincere humble servant,

“ELIZ. MONTAGU.

“I made my friend Gen. Paoli very happy by presenting him with your Poems. The muses crown virtue when fortune refuses to do it.”

After passing through four editions within twelve months, this first volume was followed, ere the end of the year, by another, in which she and her brother joined: the title was “Miscellaneous Pieces in Prose, by J. and A. L. Aikin.” These likewise met with much notice and admiration, and have been several times reprinted.

Having thus successfully laid the foundation of a literary reputation, she might have gone on to longer and more important works, had not an event, of the greatest consequence in all women's lives, now taken

place which subjected her to new influences, new duties, and station in life.

Shortly before this time, there came as a pupil to the Academy a young Frenchman of the name of Rochemont Barbauld, descended from a family of French Protestants. During the persecutions of Louis XIV., his grandfather, then a boy, was carried on board a ship inclosed in a cask and conveyed to England; and on the marriage of one of the daughters of George II. to the Elector of Hesse, was appointed his chaplain, and attended her to Cassel.

At this place his son Rochemont was born. In the breaking up of the household of the Electress he returned to England with his father, who destined him for the Church, but somewhat unadvisedly sent him for instruction to the dissenting Warrington Academy; and from the change of opinions formed there, he felt obliged to renounce his expectations from the Church, though by doing so he raised the further obstacles of want of fortune and profession to the objections already felt by Miss Aikin's parents to his union with their daughter.

Lucy Aikin speaks in strong but perhaps appropriate terms of this event; which, consideration towards surviving members of the Barbauld family, prevented her saying when she first wrote the life of her aunt.

"Her attachment to Mr Barbauld was the illusion of a romantic fancy—not of a tender heart. Had her true affections been early called forth by a more

genial home atmosphere, she would never have allowed herself to be caught by crazy demonstrations of amorous rapture, set off with theatrical French manners, or have conceived of such exaggerated passion as a safe foundation on which to raise the sober structure of domestic happiness. My father ascribed that ill-starred union in great part to the baleful influence of the 'Nouvelle Heloise,' Mr B. impersonating St Preux. She was informed by a true friend that he had experienced one attack of insanity, and was urged to break off the engagement on that account.—'Then,' answered she, 'if I were now to disappoint him, he would certainly go mad.' To this there could be no reply; and with a kind of desperate generosity she rushed upon her melancholy destiny. It should, however, in justice be said, that a more upright, benevolent, generous, or independent spirit than Mr Barbauld's did not exist, as far as his malady would permit; his moral character did honour to her choice, but he was liable to fits of insane fury, frightful in a schoolmaster. Her sufferings with such a husband, who shall estimate? Children this pair seemed immediately to have despaired of. My brother Charles, born only one year after their marriage, was bespoken by them almost directly, they took him home with them before he was two years old . . . . she enjoyed in his dutiful affection—in the charms of his delightful disposition—his talents and his accomplished mind, her pride, her pleasures, the best solace of her lonely age. Mrs Barbauld's

indolence was a standing subject of regret and reproach with the admirers of her genius—but those who blamed her, little knew the daily and hourly miseries of her home;—they could not compute the amount of hindrances proceeding from her husband's crazy habits, and the dreadful apprehensions with which they could not fail to inspire her.

“At length the blow fell—Mr B.'s insanity became manifest, undeniable, and it took the unfortunate form of a quarrel with his wife. Well for her that she had the protection of an opposite neighbour in her brother! We were all of us constantly on the watch as long as she persisted in occupying the same house with the lunatic. Her life was in perpetual danger. Then shone forth the nobleness of her spirit. She had a larger share than any woman I ever knew of the great quality of courage—courage both physical and moral. She was willing to expose herself to really frightful danger from the madman's rage, rather than allow him to be irritated by necessary restraint. When all was over and this miserable chapter of her history finally closed, her genius reasserted its claims. Her best poems, her noble though not appreciated 1811—all those evincing a tenderness she had never before been known to possess—bear date from her widowhood.”

Unconscious of the future miseries of her life, Mrs Barbauld shortly after her marriage prepared to accompany her husband to the village of Palgrave in Suffolk, where he had accepted the charge of a

At Pal-  
grave in  
Suffolk.



dissenting congregation, and opened a boys' school. Before they had determined upon this place Mrs Montagu wrote to propose to her to become the Principal of a kind of Ladies' College which she wished to establish, and in these days it is curious to read in Mrs Barbauld's answer the reasons she gives for declining the offer. "A kind of Academy for ladies," she says, "where they are to be taught in a regular manner the various branches of science, appears to me better calculated to form such characters as the *Précieuses* or *Femmes Savantes* than good wives or agreeable companions. . . . The best way for a woman to acquire knowledge is from conversation with a father or brother, and by such a course of reading as they may recommend . . . perhaps you may think that having myself stepped out of the bounds of female reserve in becoming an author, it is with an ill grace I offer these sentiments—but . . . my situation has been peculiar, and would be no rule for others. I should likewise object to the age proposed—geography, languages, &c., are best learned from about nine to thirteen. I should have little hopes of cultivating a love of knowledge in a young lady of fifteen who came to me ignorant and uncultivated . . . it is too late then to begin to learn. The empire of the passions is coming on . . . those attachments begin to be formed, which influence the happiness of future life—the care of a mother alone can give suitable attention to this important period. . . . The ease and grace of society; the duties in

their own family,—to their friends, the detail of domestic economy . . . . lastly, their behaviour to the other half of their species, who then begin to court their notice . . . . these are the accomplishments which a young woman has to learn till she is married, or fit to be so ; and surely these are not to be learned in a school . . . . my next reason is that I am not at all fit for the task. I have seen a good deal of the education of boys, but in a girls' school I should be quite a novice. I never was at one myself, I have not even the advantage of sisters ; indeed, for the early part of my life I conversed little with my own sex. In the village where I was, there was none to converse with ; and this I am sensible has given me an awkwardness about common things which would make me peculiarly unfit for the education of girls. . . . I could not judge of their music, their dancing ; and if I attempted to correct their air, they might be tempted to smile at my own, for I know myself to be remarkably deficient in gracefulness of person in my air and manner. I am sensible the common schools are upon a very bad plan, and believe I could project a better ; but I could not execute it."

The rapid and uninterrupted success of the school was no doubt partly owing to Mrs Barbauld's name ; and Mr Barbauld's county connections brought them several sons of noblemen and gentlemen of fortune. Mrs Barbauld threw herself heart and soul into the work. She kept all the accounts (still extant) of the school and their private purse. She wrote charming

Success of  
the School.

lectures on History and Geography, and took the entire charge of a class of little boys. The first Lord Denman, Sir William Gell, Dr Sayers, and William Taylor of Norwich, both well-known writers, were among these. For them and her nephew Charles she wrote her "Early Lessons" and "Hymns in Prose." Dr Johnson and Mr Fox were both pleased to express their disapproval of her wasting her talents in writing books for children ;\* but, practically employed in education as she then was, she felt the entire want of elementary books fit to put into their hands, and naturally was led to try to supply it. Her preface to the "Early Lessons," first written for her little Charles, explains this.

"This little publication was made for a particular child, but the public is welcome to the use of it. It was found that amidst the multitude of books professedly written for children, there is not one adapted to the comprehension of a child from two to three years old. A grave remark, or a connected story, however simple, is above his capacity, and *nonsense* is always below it, for folly is worse than ignorance. Another defect is the want of *good paper*, a *clear and large type*, and large spaces. Those only who have actually taught young children can be sensible how necessary these assistances are. The eye of a child cannot catch a small, obscure, ill-formed word amidst a number of others all equally unknown. To supply these deficiencies is the object of this book. The task

\* See Boswell's Life of Johnson, and Recollections of C. J. Fox by Mr Rogers.



is humble, but not mean ; for to lay the first stone of a noble building, and to plant the first idea in a human mind, can be no dishonour to any hand."

Of the "Hymns in Prose for Children," perhaps the best known of all her writings, she says in her preface her "peculiar object was to impress devotional feelings as early as possible on the infant mind—to impress them, by connecting religion with a variety of sensible objects, with all that he sees, all he hears, all that affects his young mind with wonder and delight ; and thus by deep, strong, and permanent associations, to lay the best foundation for practical devotion in future life." That this end was accomplished, the numerous editions, even to the present time, of this charming little work, fully shows.

To relieve their minds as much as possible during this busy life, Mr and Mrs Barbauld always spent their winter vacation in London, and took some journey in the summer. A few extracts from the letters she regularly wrote to her brother are here given.

"LONDON, *January*, 1784.

"Well, my dear brother, here we are in this busy town, nothing in which (the sight of friends excepted) has given us so much pleasure as the sight of the balloon exhibiting in the Pantheon. It is sixteen feet one way and seventeen another. When set loose from the weight, it mounts to the top of that magnificent dome with such an easy motion as puts one in mind of Milton's line, "rose like an exhalation." . . . Next to the balloon, Miss Burney is the object of public

curiosity. I had the pleasure of meeting her yesterday. She is a very unaffected, sweet, and pleasing young lady—but you, now I think of it, are a Goth, and have not read Cecilia. Read it, read it, for shame! . . . .

“I begin to be giddy with the whirl of London, and, feel my spirits flag. There are so many drawbacks from hair-dressers, bad weather, and fatigue, that it requires strong health greatly to enjoy being abroad.

“We are got into the visiting way here, which I do not consider quite as an idle employment, because it leads to connections; but the hours are intolerably late. The other day, at Mrs Chapone’s, none of the party but ourselves was come at a quarter to eight, and the first lady that arrived said she hurried away from dinner without waiting for coffee. There goes a story of the Duchess of Devonshire, that she said to a tradesman, ‘Call on me to-morrow morning at four,’ and that the honest man knocked the family up at day-break. Last week we met the American Bishops at Mr Vaughan’s,—if bishops they may be called—without title, without diocese, and without lawn sleeves. I wonder if our bishops will consecrate them, for they have made very free of the Common Prayer, and have left out two Creeds out of three. . . . .

“I have been much pleased with the poems of the Scottish Ploughman (Burns). His Cotter’s Saturday Night has much the same merit as the Schoolmistress; and the Daisy, and the Mouse, are charming. The

Eton Boys have published a periodical which they say is clever. Dr Price has a letter from Mr Howard, dated Amsterdam; he says the Emperor gave him a long audience. A pasquinade was fixed upon the gates of the lunatic hospital in Vienna, 'Josephus, ubicumque secundus, hic primus.'

"The King, I heard, was playing at drafts with Dr Willis, and having got a man to the top, the Dr asked 'if he would not *crown his king*.' 'No,' said his Majesty, 'for I think a king the most miserable man on earth.'\* . . . .

"Charles is losing his hair (after a fever), I believe I ought to have the rest shaved, but it is such a frightful thing to see a boy in a wig. Do you remember some of my father's scholars in wigs? I do, and coat lappets set out with buckram. Well, I hope we do improve in taste. . . .

"What have you seen, you will say, in London? Why, in the first place, Miss More's new play, which fills the house very well, and is pretty generally liked. Miss More is, I assure you, very much the ton, and moreover has got £600 or £700 by her play. I wish I could produce one every two winters; we would not keep school. I cannot say, however, that I cried so much at 'Percy,' as I laughed at the 'School for

\* Mrs Barbauld always felt respect and attachment to the King, partly perhaps from being exactly of the same age. Her writings seem to have become known at Court, as her mother, in one of her letters, says "Miss Belsham has heard that Her Majesty (Queen Charlotte) has declared, that if she is an enthusiast in anything, it is in admiration of Mrs Barbauld."

Scandal,' which is positively the wittiest play I remember to have seen, and I am sorry to add, one of the most immoral and licentious. In principles, I mean, for in language it is very decent.

"Mrs Montagu, not content with being the Queen of literature and elegant society, sets up for the Queen of fashion and splendour. She is building a very fine house, has a very fine service of plate, dresses, visits more than ever, and I am afraid will be as much the woman of the world as the philosopher. I heard much of the Astronomer,\* who has discovered three hundred new stars and a new planet or comet. He was a piper in a Hessian regiment, and has improved telescopes to an astonishing degree. He has sat, they say, for twenty-four hours, rubbing and polishing his spectrum, and been fed by the attention of others.

"Mrs Montague, who entertains all the aristocrats of France, had invited a Marchioness De Boufflers and her daughter to dinner. After making her wait till six, the Marchioness came and made an apology for her daughter, that just as she was going to dress, she was seized with a '*degout momentané du monde*,' and could not wait upon her.

"Mr Brand Hollis has sent me an American poem, a regular epic in twelve books—The Conquest of Canaan—but I hope I need not read it. Not that the poetry is bad, if the subject were more interesting, What had he to do to make Joshua his hero, when he had Washington of his own growth."

\* Herschel.

## CHAPTER XIII.

Removes to Hampstead—Mrs Barbauld's death.

AFTER eleven years spent in teaching, Mrs Barbauld, as well as her husband, found themselves so much exhausted and out of health, that they gave up their school in 1786, and after a year spent on the continent, and another in London, fixed themselves at Hampstead, where, besides taking one or two pupils, Mr Barbauld accepted an invitation to perform duty at a small chapel, for which a larger building has now been substituted, of which the Rev. Dr Sadler is the minister.

At Hampstead, Mrs Barbauld wrote several of her prose essays, and contributed to Dr Aikin's popular little work of "Evenings at Home," of which, however, only fourteen out of ninety-nine pieces are hers. Also a poem addressed to Mr Wilberforce on the rejection of the Bill for abolishing the Slave Trade. Mrs Hannah More acknowledged a copy of the poem as follows :—

"COWSLIP GREEN, *July* 1791.

"MY DEAR MADAM,—Sickness and a variety of perplexing circumstances have thrown me so much out of the way of seeing you, that I hardly feel myself

intituled to any mark of kindness from you. But had I seen your incomparable Poem by *accident*, and had it *not* come to me endeared as your gift, I should not have been able to have withheld writing to you to express my delight, my gratitude, my admiration. I cannot tell you how many times I have read it. I really had begun to pray (as I told the excellent person to whom you have addressed it) that my poetical enthusiasm was quite dead, but I find that, like another idol, it was only gone a journey, or was asleep, and that it can be awakened at any time by such verses as you have sent me. I thank you for writing so well, for writing on a subject so near my heart, and for addressing it to one so every way worthy of your highest esteem. I could not forbear repeating to him part of the animated description of the union of barbarity and voluptuousness in the West Indian woman, and he did full justice to this striking picture.\* He is now upon a visit to me, and I wish I

- 
- \* Lo ! where reclined, pale Beauty courts the breeze  
Diffused on sofas of voluptuous ease ;  
With anxious awe her menial train around  
Catch her faint whispers of half-uttered sound ;  
See her, in monstrous fellowship unite  
At once the Scythian and the Sybarite !  
Blending repugnant vices, misallied,  
Which frugal nature purposed to divide ;  
See her, with indolence to fierceness joined,  
Of body delicate, infirm of mind,  
With languid tones imperious mandates urge ;  
With arm recumbent wield the household scourge ;  
And with unruffled mein, and placid sounds,  
Contriving torture, and inflicting wounds.

could tempt Mr Barbauld and you to indulge me with your company. . . . You would find quiet, pleasing, picturesque scenery, a few books, and a great deal of friendship.

"I hardly know how to enclose the trifling verses within. I wrote them in a playful hour at the bishop's; they owe their appearance in print to the gallantry of my friend Mr Walpole. To send them to you is keeping up the African trade of beads and bits of glass in exchange for gold and ivory. My sisters join me in kind regards to Mr B. and yourself—I am, my dear Madam, your obliged and very affectionate,

H. MORE."

The poem mentioned at the end of this letter was called Bonner's Ghost, in which he is supposed to lament the liberality of the age; this drew an answer. It was never printed, but copies must have been circulated, as the lines—

"Nor brush one cobweb from St Paul's  
Lest you should shake the dome,"

were quoted in a Church debate in the House of Commons. It is to be supposed she did *not* send a copy to her friend Hannah More.

In about four years of her residence at Hampstead, Mr and Mrs Barbauld, as I have before mentioned, went to join Dr Aikin's family at Stoke Newington, where they all remained for the rest of their lives.

The following letter, written by Sir James Mackin-

<sup>1</sup>

My love (Nov 1787-1)

tosh, then an Indian judge, was sent to their mutual friend, Mrs John Taylor of Norwich:—

“BOMBAY, 10th Oct., 1808.


“If I had been a little more acquainted with Mrs Barbauld, I should have written to her.\* If I could have spoken any consolation, it would have been only payment of a long arrear of instruction and pleasure for thirty years. In another sense, it would have been but the payment of a debt. I could have said little but what I learned from herself. If ever there was a writer whose wisdom is made to be useful in the time of need, it is Mrs Barbauld. No moralist has ever more exactly touched the point of the greatest practicable purity, without being lost in exaggeration or sinking into meanness. She has cultivated a philosophy which will raise and animate her, without refining it to that degree when it is no longer applicable to the gross purposes of human life, and when it is too apt to evaporate in hypocrisy and ostentation. Her observations on the moral of ‘Clarissa’ are as fine a piece of mitigated and rational stoicism as our language can boast of; and she who has so beautifully taught us the folly of inconsistent expectations and complaints, can never want practical wisdom under the sharpest calamities. Mental disease is perhaps the subject on which topics of consolation are the most difficult to be managed. Yet I have been

\* On the aberration of intellect, under which her husband was then suffering.



engaged since my arrival here in a very singular and not altogether unsuccessful correspondence with poor Hall, formerly of Cambridge, on the subject of his own insanity. With Mrs B.'s firmer and calmer philosophy, I should think it easy to teach the imagination habitually to consider the evil only as a bodily disease, of which the mental disturbance is a mere symptom. That this habit deprives insanity of its mysterious horrors, is obvious enough from the instance of febrile delirium, which fills us with no more horror than any other morbid appearance, because we steadily and constantly consider it as an effect. The horrible character of the disease seems much to depend on its being considered as arising from some secret and mysterious change in the mind, which, by a sort of noble superstition, is exalted above vulgar corporeal organs. Whoever firmly regards it as the result of physical causes, will spare themselves much of this horror, and acquire the means of being useful to the sufferer. My advice may be useless, but I should wish my sympathy known to Mrs Barbauld. It is the privilege of such excellent writers to command the sympathy of the distant and unborn. It is a delightful part of their fame; and no writer is more entitled to it than Mrs Barbauld."

The authors of the last age were fortunate in their publisher, Mr Joseph Johnson of St Paul's Church-yard, whom they all regarded as a friend. He was highly intelligent, kind, and friendly, and most liberal in pecuniary matters. His generosity to Cowper on



the unexpected success of his poems, is well known. He was in the habit of collecting, at his simple hospitable table, the choicest literary society of the time, which was perhaps more entirely enjoyed than the splendid parties of Mrs Montagu. Miss Edgeworth writes to Mr Barbauld :—"What a loss! what an irretrievable loss have we all sustained by the death of our excellent friend Johnson! I am glad to find that his fortune was not injured by his generosity." Dr Aikin says in a letter to his daughter in 1804 :—"The Barbaulds and your mother and I spent yesterday with Mr Johnson at his country house near Lutham. He has got a pretty snug house, handsomely furnished, with an elegant drawing-room opening into a very good garden. We drank tea upon a nice grass plot under the shade of a mulberry-tree. Our old friend was in very good spirits, and pleased to see us. Instead of the old sybils of St Paul's Churchyard, he has got a handsome, well-dressed young waiting-maid."

Mrs Barbauld's death.

In a letter to a friend announcing the death of her, who had been to him as a mother, Mr Charles Rochemont Aikin concludes with the following passage :—

"I will fill this page with a few lines which will interest you, as being, I believe, the very last which my venerable aunt committed to paper when she felt the hand of death approaching her. It was found in her table drawer. It is a few unfinished sentences, but to me deeply interesting."

Who are you ?

Do you not know me, have you not expected me ?

Whither do you carry me ?

Come with me and you shall know.

The way is dark.

It is well trodden.

Yes, in the forward track.

Come along !

Oh, shall I see there my beloved ones, will they welcome me, will they know me, oh, tell me, tell me thou canst tell me ?

Yes, but thou must come first.

Stop a little, keep thy hand off till thou hast told me ?

I never wait.

Oh shall I see the warm sun again in my cold grave ?

Nothing is there that can feel the sun.

Oh where then ?

Come, I say.

Mrs Barbauld was buried in the family vault of Dr Aikin in Stoke Newington Churchyard.

Shortly after her death, Mr C. R. Aikin was requested by the congregation of Newington Green Chapel, where she had attended as long as her strength allowed, to place some memorial of her upon their walls.

A marble tablet was therefore erected by him with



the following inscription written by her nephew  
Arthur Aikin.

**Epitaph.**

IN MEMORY OF

**ANNA LETITIA BARBAULD,**

DAUGHTER OF JOHN AIKIN, D.D.,

AND WIFE OF

THE REV. ROCHEMONT BARBAULD,

FORMERLY THE RESPECTED MINISTER OF THIS CONGREGATION.

SHE WAS BORN AT KIBWORTH IN LEICESTERSHIRE, 20TH JUNE 1743,  
AND DIED AT STOKE NEWINGTON, 9TH MARCH 1825.

Endowed by the giver of all good  
with wit, genius, poetic talent, and a vigorous understanding, she  
employed these high gifts  
in promoting the cause of humanity, peace, and justice,  
of civil and religious liberty,  
of pure, ardent, and affectionate devotion.

Let the young, nurtured by her writings in the pure spirit  
of christian morality ;  
let those of maturer years, capable of appreciating  
the acuteness, the brilliant fancy, and sound reasoning of her  
literary compositions ;  
let the surviving few who shared her delightful  
and instructive conversation,  
bear witness  
that this monument records  
no exaggerated praise.

## CHAPTER XIV.

Mrs Charles Aikin—Sharpe Family—Rogers Family—Miss Bengel.

WHEN I was a little more than thirteen, and my <sup>Mrs Chas. Aikin.</sup> only brother an unweaned infant, we had the unspeakable sorrow of losing my dear mother, of a violent attack of fever, lasting about a week. To add to the distress, my second sister, a sweet amiable girl, followed her mother a few weeks after, from a similar attack. We discovered, long after, as I have mentioned, that this fever was caused by the undrained condition of our house.

My mother, fondly loved by all her family, had also the power of immediately fascinating those who had only seen her once or twice. I often, in after life, met persons who assured me of this. The very servants would dispute as to which should answer her bell. My Aunt Lucy, in a letter to my sister, says :—

“Forgetfulness of self is the greatest charm of manner. . . . From early youth this was the distinguishing charm of your most lovely mother, whom every one loved at sight, and half adored on thorough knowledge. By this charm she silenced detraction, and made envy relent ; her learning, and even her beauty, were forgiven by rivals ; and old and young,

men and women, pressed around to claim her as a friend."

My father in his misery and desolation, when his poor little girl had joined her mother, wished naturally to keep the remainder of his children with him; but as we had no aunt or single relation at liberty who could take charge of us, he was obliged to engage a governess.

The two motherless little ones, both under three years, were tended by a dear woman, clever and devoted, who had loved my mother, and who remained in our house till her own death at an advanced age.

On my Aunt Barbauld's death four years after that of my mother, we left the city, and my Aunt Lucy offered to take charge of my second sister at Hampstead for a year or two, I being at sixteen thought old enough to be mistress of my father's house—sadly too young, I now think. My dear father's tenderness, good sense, and firmness supported me; and our old nurse was housekeeper and general director.

My sister Susan, a bright lively girl of thirteen, was very unwilling to leave her home for the quiet small house in Church Row, but my aunt had many friends who were very kind to her, and she had quite sufficient ability to enjoy their good society.

In the pleasant new neighbourhood in which we found ourselves I also found kind and useful friends, who overlooked my mistakes, and encouraged a shy and timid girl.

My mother was the eldest daughter of Gilbert Wakefield, to whom she was fondly attached, regarding him always as a martyr. His severe sentence of a heavy fine and two years' imprisonment for what now seems a harmless though rash pamphlet, was really a sentence of death, as the dreadful fever which he contracted in Dorchester Castle proved fatal a short time after his release. My daughter has compiled from my old letters an account of his life, to which I need add no more. His friend, Mr Fox, was indignant at his sentence, but not being then in office, was unable to mitigate it. Lord Erskine offered to defend him for nothing, but he declined the offer.

My mother spent the two years among her kind friends in Lancashire — first with the invaluable Crompton family at their delightful house near Liverpool, and afterwards at the Rev. Dr Shepherd's, and at Allerton Hall, where William Roscoe was living among his large family, respected and beloved. He was then member for Liverpool, and his beautiful house was constantly visited by distinguished and accomplished persons.

My mother met there Lucy Aikin, with whom she was destined to be so nearly connected.

In the two years which I spent alone with my father and little brother and sister, my sister Susan being at Hampstead, I met with much kindness from many old friends, and also made many new ones. The part of the town where we lived was then almost exclusively the lawyers' quarter. I have heard

of Sydney Smith taking a house for the season there to enjoy their good society. Many of the judges, and almost all the members of the bar, lived close to Russell Square. The move to the west began many years after, when Bayswater came into existence.

Sharpe  
Family.

I received much kindness and needed advice from an admirable friend of my aunt's, Miss Catherine Sharpe, whose father had married for a second time a sister of Mr Rogers, who died at the birth of her youngest son ; and the father soon following her, the young family of five sons and a daughter were left to the care of their half sister, then quite a young woman, who henceforward devoted herself to their care and education. They all did credit to her. Mr Sutton Sharpe, the eldest, had his life been prolonged, would, in the opinion of his friends, have risen to the highest dignity at the bar. His brother Samuel, a partner in his uncle's bank, spent a long life in the study chiefly of Egyptian antiquities, and in the translation of the Scriptures. The daughter married Mr Edwin Field, and the whole family did honour to the care and devotion of their sister.

Many years after, when they had all houses of their own, Miss Sharpe proposed to my father, then living in a large old house in Bloomsbury Square, with my uncle Arthur and sister Catherine, that she should come and live with them, which plan was brought about, and lasted till their deaths—a most perfectly happy and successful arrangement.

Miss Sharpe, partly from her own taste, and also




from her connection with the Rogers family, was warmly attached to art, and was acquainted with many artists, whom I met at her house. From my earliest childhood I had the same love, and my father indulged me in frequent lessons from a poor artist friend, whose taste and knowledge of her art was far superior to her execution.

Miss Sharpe kindly afforded me the opportunities of visiting all the galleries and exhibitions. Often have I been with her and Mr Henry Rogers to these places and Christie's Rooms, and received a valuable lesson from their remarks. Sometimes I would venture to say I *could not* admire some dingy old painting. "Look at it till you do," would be the answer.

This Mr H. Rogers was a younger brother of the poet, of charming manners, sweet temper, and fine taste. He was very kind to me, flattering me once by the name of Psyche. He died long before his elder brother and their sister, with whom he lived.

The Rogers family had been very early friends of my own, the father having lived at Newington Green. Of course, when Mr Rogers had built a house in the Green Park, and lived chiefly in the highest society, the distance from us prevented much intimacy, but I have many affectionate letters which show that he never forgot his old friends; and in his extreme old age would often *walk* from his own house to his bank in the city, paying a visit to my father and uncle in his way. I never could understand the brutal jokes made upon his personal appearance. He had a good



figure, of middle height, and his face, except for the length of his chin, rather handsome and expressive. I believe it was the extreme paleness of his complexion which startled people in his youth, though to me who only knew him in old age it was nothing remarkable. His manners were polished and courteous, and he was most generous and benevolent to all who asked his help. His good sayings and anecdotes have been often repeated, but I remember two which I never saw printed.

Going one night to the gallery of the opera, which he thought the best place for hearing, he noticed a respectable looking elderly man gazing at him very intently for some time. At last, between the acts, he left his seat, and placing himself in front of Mr Rogers, said in a solemn tone, "Pray, sir, is your name Samuel Rogers?"


Mr Rogers, who always cherished the hope that his works were popular with the lower classes, replied most graciously that it was.

"Then, sir," said the man, "I should be glad to know, if you please, why you have changed your *poulterer*?"

The other story was of a sharp-witted young Genevese, who went, an entire stranger, to the head of the great merchant firm of "Hope & Co., Amsterdam," and coolly asked him to take him into partnership, mentioning as an inducement that he was engaged to marry a daughter of one of the Baring family. He then went to Mr Baring, and asked for

the hand of his daughter, saying that he expected to be taken into partnership by Mr Hope, and by this ingenious device succeeded in both his objects. This story Mr Rogers, in his old age, when his memory was nearly gone, heard repeated at his own table by some of the persons who got round him, to the annoyance of his relations. He hardly seemed to notice it, but they were all shocked and startled when he began to tell it all over again as if he had not heard a word.

I must not omit to mention Miss Bender, who <sup>Miss</sup> honoured me by her kind notice in these days. <sup>Bender.</sup> She had attained considerable literary celebrity, though now, I fear, scarcely remembered—biography, novels, and translations from the German writers little known. My aunt was able to give her help and advice about printing and publishers. She had the greatest respect and love for my aunt, which was warmly returned. She was a most interesting and lovable person, full of enthusiasm and vivacity, with a most melodious voice, and when wound up by a cup of strong coffee, which I always ordered for her when she came to our house, she would talk enchantingly. She was a tall, dark woman, with fine dark eyes. Miss Smirke painted a picture of her, which was very like, and which I now have. In dress and appearance, however, she was almost a female George Dyer. She lived with her old mother in lodgings in Grafton Street, but poor and shabby as they were, she received in them people well worth seeing. Mr Robinson



describes a party to which my father and I also went, and remember meeting him. I will give his account:—

“Went to Miss Benger’s, where I found a large party. Had some conversation with Miss Jane Porter. Her stately figure and graceful manner made an impression upon me. I was introduced to a character—Miss Wesley, a niece of the celebrated John, and daughter of Samuel Wesley. She is said to be a devout and most actively benevolent woman. Eccentric in her habits, but most estimable in all the great points of character. A very lively little body, with a short round person, in a constant fidget of good nature and harmless vanity. She has written novels which do not sell, and is reported to have said to Miss Edgeworth, ‘We sisters of the quill ought to know one another.’ She said she had friends of all sorts in religion, and was glad she had, as she would not probably become uncharitable.”

Of another evening he says:—

“A party at Miss Benger’s. Saw Dr Kitchener, of gastronomic celebrity, but had no conversation with him. A grave and formal man, with a long face and spectacles. Other authors were there—a Mr Jerdan, editor of the *Literary Gazette*, a work I do not like. Miss Landon, a young poetess, a *starling*, the L. E. L. of the gazette, with a gay, good-humoured face, and Miss Jane Porter.”


Angus Fletcher, son of Mrs Fletcher of Edinburgh, a fine young man, then studying sculpture in London, used to come before the other guests, to arrange Miss

Bender's *turban* for her, and to make her, and things in general, rather more tidy.

In her youth Miss Bender had a great admiration for Mrs Inchbald, and not then being able to obtain an introduction to the great novelist, she bribed her servant to let her take her place at her lodgings in the evening. Accordingly in cap and apron she brought up the tea kettle and tea tray; and I presume this led to an introduction, as she once told us in illustration of Mrs Inchbald's penurious habits, that she was spending an evening with her in very cold weather, when in spite of the delightful talk of her hostess, it grew so dreadfully cold that she rose to go. Mrs Inchbald not being able to make up her mind to the extravagance of putting on more coal, but being equally desirous to enjoy the talk, exclaimed, "Oh, stay a little longer, and I will push all the fire to your side."


My aunt wrote an account of her beloved friend after her death, part of which I insert.

"Elizabeth Ogilvy Bender, whose life affords an interesting example of female genius struggling into day through obstacles which might well have daunted the bolder energies of manly enterprise, was born in the city of Wells, in 1778. She was an only child, a circumstance which her affectionate heart always regarded as a misfortune. Her father was impelled by an adventurous disposition to give up commerce, and enter the navy. In consequence he removed to Chatham, which was her abode till 1797. An ardour



for knowledge disclosed itself with the first dawnings of reason. Her connections were not literary, and her sex no less than her situation debarred her from mental cultivation. She has said that in her childhood, in the tormenting want of books, she would plant herself at the windows of the only book-seller's shop in the place, to read the open pages of the books displayed, and to return day after day to see whether by good fortune any leaf had been turned over. The bent of her mind was so decided, that at length her mother allowed her to learn Latin. At thirteen she wrote a poem, which was printed, dedicated to Lady de Crespigny, to whom she was introduced by her uncle, Sir David Ogilvy, and from whom she afterwards received very flattering attentions.

"Her father contemplated her progress with delight and pride, and on his appointment as purser on board Admiral Keith's own ship, he directed that no expense should be spared in instruction in every branch of knowledge she might desire ; but his death within a year after blighted this fair prospect. Cares and difficulties succeeded—the widow and orphan became victims of fraud, and a very slender provision was all that could be saved from the wreck. They removed to Devizes the following year, where they had friends and relations. But the longing she felt for the society of the most excellent, could only be gratified in London, whither she prevailed on her mother to remove in 1800. Here partly through the favour of Lady de Crespigny, and the friendship of the Miss



Porters and Miss Sarah Wesley, she immediately found herself in society, where her merit was fully appreciated. She was gratified by an introduction to Mrs Elizabeth Hamilton, of whom she wrote so interesting a memoir, to the author of the 'Pleasures of Hope,' to Mrs Barbauld and Dr Aikin, with whose family, especially by her who inscribes with an aching heart this slender record of her genius, she contracted an intimacy never interrupted for more than twenty years. Another most valuable friendship was with the family of R. Smirke, Esq., R.A., in whose accomplished daughter she found a faithful friend, whose offices of love followed her to the last. Mrs Inchbald, Mrs Joanna Baillie, Mrs Weddell, and many other names in literature and society, might be added to those who delighted in her conversation, and took an interest in her happiness. She published first a poem on the Abolition of the Slave Trade, then two novels, later, 'Memoirs of Mrs Hamilton,' 'Notices of Klopstock and his Friends, with a translation of their letters,' 'The Life of Anne Boleyn,' Memoirs of Mary Queen of Scots, and of the Queen of Bohemia.

But to those who knew her and enjoyed her friendship, her writings, pleasing and beautiful as they are, were the smallest part of her merit and her attraction. Endowed with the warmest and most grateful of human hearts, she united to the utmost delicacy and nobleness of sentiment, active benevolence, which knew no limit, but the furthest extent of her ability and a boundless enthusiasm for the good and fair. Her

lively imagination, and the flow of eloquence which it inspired, aided by one of the most melodious of voices, lent an inexpressible charm to her conversation. As a companion whether for the graver or the gayer hour, she had indeed few equals ; and her constant forgetfulness of self, and unfailing sympathy for others, rendered her the friend, the favourite, the confidant of persons of both sexes, all classes and all ages. Many would have concurred in judgment with Madame de Stael when she pronounced Miss Benger the most interesting woman she had seen in England.

“Of envy and jealousy there was not a trace in her composition ; her probity, veracity, and honour were perfect. Though not less free from pride than from vanity, her sense of independence was such that no one could fix upon her the slightest obligation capable of lowering her in any eyes, and her generous propensity to seek those who most needed her friendship, rendered her much oftener the obliger than the person obliged. It is gratifying to reflect to how many hearts her merit found its way. Few persons have been more widely deplored in their sphere of acquaintance, but those who loved her best could not but confess that their regrets were selfish. To her the pains of sensibility were more than its joys. Her childhood and early youth were consumed in solitude of mind, and under a sense of the contrariety between her genius and her fate, which rendered them sad and full of bitterness ; her maturer years were tried by cares, privations, and disappointments, not seldom by



unfeeling slights or thankless neglect. The irritability of her constitution, aggravated by inquietude of mind, had rendered her life one long disease. Old age, which she neither wished nor expected to attain, might have found her solitary and ill provided—now she has taken ‘the wings of the dove to flee away and be at rest.’ A short but painless illness terminated her life on January 9th, 1827 (aged 49.)”

## CHAPTER XV.

Lord Denman—Bedford College—Mrs Jameson—Mr Kenyon—Irving—Flaxman—  
Stothard—Lady Callcot—Smirke, R.A.—Actors—Fanny Kemble.

THE first Lord Denman, though an only son, was sent from his home in Derbyshire to be a pupil of Mrs Barbauld's before he was four years old. Besides giving lessons in her husband's school, my aunt had a few little boys to be companions to her nephew Charles, who came to her when he was just two years old. For these little ones she wrote first "Early Lessons," and then the "Hymns in Prose," there being then few books whatever fit for children to read.

Lord Den- In the old letters there is often mention of "dear  
man. little Tommy Denman," who never forgot his early teacher, and would always in after times speak of her to us in terms of warm affection, saying that if he had any eloquence it was owing to his readings with Mrs Barbauld. When we removed to that part of the town, the Denmans were living in Russell Square. They were a large family of six daughters, and I think five sons, the elder girls about my age. Lady Denman was very handsome, as were her daughters, but from ill-health and other causes did not take much part in the education of her family, and they had no governess. Their father, whom they worshipped, found time, in the midst of overwhelming work as Attorney-

General, to give them Latin lessons before he went to chambers. He was a magnificent looking man, with a benevolent expression. They had occasional parties, to which we were kindly invited. At one of these we met Lord Brougham and his only child, a girl of about fifteen. As she was the image of her father, she must have been plain and ungainly, but she had besides, poor thing, a disease of the heart, which made her skin almost black. She indeed died before she was twenty, in spite of all his loving care; he seemed to doat upon her, and his eyes followed her about always as she danced. At the end of the evening a country dance was formed (old fashioned even then), in which the two great lawyers joined. All of a sudden Lord Denman fell down as if he had been shot; he had snapped his tendon Achillis, and was lame for months. With the second Miss Denman I was very intimate for some years. She married Archdeacon Hodgson, Provost of Eton, a most delightful man, but as old as her father, and was naturally left a young widow. The Queen gave her a pretty cottage in Kew Gardens, and made her superintendent of the old palace.

Among the best and dearest friends of my youth I must reckon Mrs Reid, the widow of a physician who had been intimate in Dr Aikin's family. He died soon after his marriage, and as they were childless, Mrs Reid was free to devote her ample fortune to the benevolent plans of her warm heart. She took a peculiar interest in the education of her own sex; and

Bedford  
College.

with the practical help of my father-in-law and a few other gentlemen, established a "College for young ladies" in a house which she took in Bedford Square, the first thing of the kind ever heard of. It was a great success; and on Mrs Reid's leaving the bulk of her large fortune to it, was removed to York Place, where it now flourishes under the name of Bedford College.

I went over the building lately, and while admiring the handsome rooms and convenient appliances for study, could not help feeling sad that she to whose generosity all was owing should not only never have seen it, but should be personally unknown to every one in the place. I looked in vain also for any bust or picture of her sweet face; but photographs were unknown before her death, and there seemed to have been no other likeness of her known. A window with her initials and a text were her only memorial.

Mrs Jameson.

Mrs Reid lived with her sister, Miss Sturch, in the Regent's Park, and received a good deal of company. At one of her parties I met Mrs Jameson, who had just published a book which made a great sensation, the "Diary of an Ennuyée." The heroine, an interesting, heart-broken creature, was said to be intended for a portrait of herself, and I expected accordingly to see a lovely young woman, broken down with suffering and sorrow. What was my dismay and disappointment to behold a stout middle-aged lady, without beauty of face or figure, and with frizzy red hair—such as may have been since thought beautiful, but

was then considered almost a deformity. She also seemed to enjoy the comforts of Mrs Reid's luxurious house, and talked quite openly of the wrongs she had suffered from her husband.

In my youthful ignorance, however, I probably did her injustice, as I afterwards heard that she had been an excellent daughter and sister, and borne a life of hardship with great fortitude and goodness.

The delightful Mr Kenyon was one of Mrs Reid's <sup>Mr Ken-</sup> frequent guests. Highly cultivated, genial, and enter-<sup>you.</sup> taining, he seemed born only to enjoy and dispense happiness, and his ample fortune enabled him to carry out all the promptings of his generous heart.

Many years later in my married life we were living at Wimbledon, and had the pleasure of seeing a good deal of Mr Kenyon. He took a fancy to a small house on the Common, which he bought and fitted up exquisitely, and often spent a few weeks in it.

He was very intimate with Mr Robinson, and like him a great talker; but as a friend said to me, Mr Robinson talks you *down*, Mr Kenyon talks you *up*. He once said to me, "Life is so very pleasant that I do not like to think how old I am." He was much beyond seventy at this time.

He died soon after, and left a most kind and considerate will—legacies to many people to whom they were most welcome; the bulk of his fortune to his cousin Mrs Browning. He had no nearer relations.

Walking with my sister on Hampstead Heath one Irving day we saw a great crowd round a tree, and going

nearer saw a man preaching—a tall figure, with long black hair parted down the middle, fine features, but with a terrible cast in his eye. He was the celebrated Edward Irving, the friend of Carlyle, who was then drawing crowds of the most distinguished and fashionable people to his church in London, and who occasionally addressed a lower audience out of doors. We could not get near enough to hear his words, but his action was impressive and graceful, and he was listened to with the deepest attention.

**Flaxman.** The circle of artists whom Miss Sharpe's hospitality drew around her, and which I was permitted to join, were very interesting to me. The first I shall name was the illustrious Flaxman. I have often visited him in his studio, and watched him in his work, attended and helped by his sister, a good artist herself, and like him much deformed and small. He had, however, a fine head, mild and simple in his manners, and altogether a most interesting being. He had been married, but his wife was dead, and her sister lived with them—a clever, active woman, who took care of them, and after Flaxman's death, aided by Mr Robinson's active generosity, fitted up a room in University College with casts from his works. My aunt writes :—

“The other day Mr Robinson ran in and said, ‘You must come with me to University College, and I shall not tell you for what.’ I obeyed, and he whisked me along breathless, but it was to see Flaxman's works, now arranged under the dome. The room is not

yet finished, and the sculptures are still all shining, but the general effect is beautiful beyond description. There will be no monument of one man's genius in London comparable to it, and I doubt not that it will be crowded at the Exhibition time with Germans and Italians, who have always known his merits better than his countrymen."

Stothard also I have often met, a simple mannered <sup>Stothard.</sup> man, with a kind, thoughtful face, and thick white hair.

Sir Martin Shee was then President of the Academy. Though no very distinguished painter, he was a literary and accomplished man, with lively, polished manners. His six children and Lady Shee often accompanied him to parties, but they were all so agreeable that I never heard any complaints at their number.

Sir A. Callcot and his wife were friends of my <sup>Lady Call-</sup> aunt, with whom I have often been to his studio to <sup>cot.</sup> see his beautiful pictures. Lady Callcot had been the widow of Admiral Graham, and governess to the children of the Emperor of Brazil. She wrote a history of that country, and was the author of several pretty children's books, "Little Arthur's History of England," &c.

I have mentioned Miss Smirke as a friend of my <sup>Smirke,</sup> mother's. She was the daughter of the Academician, <sup>R.A.</sup> and like him an excellent artist. Two of his sons also were distinguished architects. Miss Smirke lived .

alone with her father after her mother's death. He was so entirely dependent upon her for all his comfort that, when there was some talk of her marrying, he exclaimed, "Part with Mary! Impossible; why I have been used to her *all my life!*"

We also knew Mr Briggs, a cousin of Mrs Opie—I have seen a beautiful portrait of her by him; Mr Uwins, a most pleasing old gentleman, and Mr Phillips, who was the father of an interesting young family about our ages, and with whom we were for some years very intimate.

Actors.

I can also remember other great names in acting and music—Kean, Young, Macready, Liston, Munden, Farren, Mathews, Pasta, Lablache, Mario, Grisi, Jenny Lind, Rachel. I was just too late to see Mrs Siddons on the stage, and missed, by illness, an invitation from Miss Rogers to one of her readings from Shakespeare, which many people even preferred to seeing her act. Her niece, Miss Kemble, was just then at the height of her fame, and we felt the deepest interest in her, as her aunt, Miss Victoire De Camp, had been one of our governesses, and used to tell us of her niece's determination to go on the stage, to which she had a great distaste from filial affection, and a wish to save her father in a crisis in his fortunes. She was rewarded by triumphant success, as she deserved. We went with Miss De Camp to see her in Juliet a few nights after her first appearance, and certainly nothing could be more charming. She was

Fanny  
Kemble.



a little older than myself, and there must have been a strong personal likeness between us, as the first remark made to me in parties always was, "Are you not thought very like Miss Kemble?"—no doubt a great compliment to me.

## CHAPTER XVI.

Old Hampstead—The Longmans—Crabbe—Harriet Martineau—Malthus—Literary Americans—Professor Smyth—Joanna Baillie.

OldHamp-  
stead. AFTER Mr and Mrs Barbauld's first visit to Hampstead, my relations seldom saw it again for about twenty years, when my grandmother and aunt in 1825 left Stoke Newington to take up their abode in Church Row, Hampstead, and I first made acquaintance with the place, no doubt much altered since the two great ladies supplied the village with butter from their dairies, but still how different to what it is now!

I can hardly bear to think of the change. Besides the lovely heath, there were field walks and lanes in all directions, and none but the old houses, in nearly all of which we had friends living.

I think hardly any one occupied in daily business in London then lived in Hampstead, as there were no omnibuses, and of course no railroad.

One or two gentlemen, as Mr Hoare and Mr Longman, indeed went to town on horseback in a leisurely way, and there were a few stage-coaches; but we knew by sight nearly every person we met. The road to town ran between fields for nearly three miles, and except "Steel's Cottage," said to have belonged to Sir Richard, there were no houses from Camden Town to Downshire Hill.

My aunt's publishers, the great Longmans, had a large house and grounds at Hampstead, and used to give sumptuous dinners to "our authors," to which, of course, my aunt was invited. One day the poet Moore was one of the guests. He was placed next to Mrs Longman, and there was something said about his carving some poultry for her. He looked alarmed, and cried out, "I cannot carve ; I would not sit next Venus herself if she asked me to carve her doves."

Poor Mrs Longman, a matter-of-fact lady, looked perfectly bewildered by this flight.

The Longmans' old house and gardens are all destroyed now, but the magnificent cedar which stood on the lawn still exists in a garden in Prince Arthur's Road. Mr Hoare, the banker, lived in a house on the top of the heath near the pond. He was a true and constant friend to my Aunt Barbauld ; and his daughter, who lived in the old house after his death with her stepmother, was equally intimate and valued by my aunt, Lucy Aikin. The only time I ever saw Wordsworth was at a party at this house, as I have mentioned.

Mr Crabbe, the poet, was also a frequent guest at Mrs Hoare's. I have met him at my aunt's. He was a gentle, courteous old man, almost painfully humble, and looked as if he had suffered much, which was indeed the case. My aunt writes :—"Mr Crabbe came in the evening, and we made him tell us of Johnson, whom he had met with Burke at the house of Reynolds. Then we spoke of modern poets—

Burns and Montgomery ; and I had the good luck to please the amiable old man by alluding to a poem of his, which he said no one had ever mentioned to him before. 'I thought,' he said, 'when I wrote it, that there was something in it, but as nobody took notice of it, I supposed I was mistaken.' I told him I had known my father read it repeatedly, and commend it highly. It is called 'Reflections.' I will some time show it you. I think it excellent."

Harriet  
Martineau.

Harriet Martineau, one of a family long known to our own, was then beginning her brilliant career. Compelled by her father's circumstances to earn money, and prevented by almost total deafness from teaching, she turned her thoughts to writing, for which she felt an inward power. She applied to my aunt for help and advice, which were gladly given ; and her great talents were soon recognised after the publication of her "Tales on Political Economy," which were her first performance. She was very young when I first met her at Hampstead, and though plain, very agreeable-looking. It was rather formidable talking through the ivory cup which she put into your hand on first seeing her ; and her deafness had one peculiarity—she could hear perfectly in a carriage, as I found out in time, in returning to town with her one day. Her opinions became so much more advanced than my aunt's that their intimacy gradually lessened, and after her visit to America she built herself a house at the Lakes, where she always lived, so that they never met again.

The celebrated writer on Political Economy, Mr Malthus. Malthus, sometimes visited us. He had been a pupil of my *great*-grandfather, Dr Aikin, at the Warrington Academy, and had a great reverence for him, and regard for the rest of the family. Mr Malthus, when I knew him, was a polite, handsome, kind old man, tall and slender, with dark eyes.

My aunt writes to her friend, Mr Mallet—"I want to talk to you of the good man who is gone. From my childhood I have been in the habit of seeing him when he used to call on my father, whom he valued both for his own sake and for that of my grandfather. No one who knew him could help loving him, but what author of our day has been so much maligned? For the honour of the Whig ministry, one may wish they had conferred some mark of esteem on such a man as Mr Malthus; but what could it have added to him? He possessed a competence, and there was so much of the true philosopher about him, that I should have grieved to see him a clerical sinecurist instead of the useful and respected head of a college." To another friend she writes:—"We have just lost a man of whom it might be said that no one was more beloved, and no one more abused. There was scarcely any one whom I met with livelier, none with more unmingled pleasure; and of late years it was my privilege to see him pretty frequently. His temper was proof against all the ill-treatment he met with, whether in print or in *vivâ voce* debate amongst his brother political economists; his conversation was

particularly elegant, classical, and engaging. His friends justly, I think, upbraid the pusillanimity of the late ministry in omitting to confer some mark of their esteem on a man they so loudly extolled, and many of whose ideas they had profited by, but whose name had the vulgar cry against it."

"Erskine House," near "The Spaniards," on the Hampstead Heath, belonged to the great Lord Erskine; in my aunt's time it was occupied by Chief-Justice Tindal. I have been there with her. The drawing-room, commanding a beautiful and extensive view, was built by Lord Erskine at the very top of the house, and much enjoyed by him.

The "Long Room" before mentioned is now a house in Well Walk, inhabited, when I first knew it, by Mr Peter Erle, brother to the Chief-Justice, friends of my Aunt Lucy's. They one summer let this house to the Miss Fanshawes, agreeable ladies of good family and fortune, one of whom was known as the author of charming poems: one, the ingenious lines on the "Letter H" was long attributed to Lord Byron; and all children knew and loved her "Peacock at Home."

Literary  
Americans.

A number of literary Americans, chiefly from Boston, began to come over at this time with introductions to my Aunt Lucy. The first I remember seeing was Dr Channing, whom, however, she never saw, which she much regretted afterwards when she entered into a correspondence with him. He was a small, spare man, with a benignant countenance, and grave, gentle manners. He had visited my Aunt

Barbauld on a former visit to England, and wrote an account of her, which is printed in his correspondence.

Other Americans were Jared Sparkes, Dr Tuckerman, Professor Norton and his pleasing wife, and Professor Sedgwick, and many others. Of one my aunt writes :—

“ I was glad to see Mrs Follen. She has a striking countenance, worn with care and sickness, for she is in deplorable health, but the features remarkably handsome, and an animation and sensibility of look and manner which reminded me of Miss Benger. She was almost as a daughter to Dr Channing, and it is very interesting, indeed, to hear her speak of him. She made me better acquainted with him by far than his biographer knew how to do. She said he was *always learning* from every thing and every body, and no doubt it was from this universal teachableness—so worthy of a great mind—that his extraordinary candour and patience in hearing opinions of every kind was derived. He was a true seeker after truth and wisdom, and feared no kind of discussion.”

Their foreign ways of thinking, and their manners, seemed strange to us, united to their English tongues. Fifty years' intercourse with Europe have rubbed off these peculiarities, though the tone of voice is still distinguishable. Mr Everett I met at Dr Boott's soon after he was appointed Minister from the States to this country. I had before heard him preach an eloquent sermon. He was a striking and interesting man.

Professor  
Smyth.

My aunt had two very old and valued friends, who generally visited her together—Mr Smyth, Professor of Modern History at Cambridge, and Mr Whishaw, a Commissioner of Audit. They were both adepts in the art of conversation, in which my aunt excelled also.

Professor Smyth was a lively Irishman, full of wit and good spirits. In his early days he had been tutor to the son of Sheridan, and wrote a most amusing little book on the subject. He was a tall, slender, old gentleman, dressed in a curious fashion—light coloured clothes, a gay waistcoat, white silk stockings, and shorts. He had a fine animated countenance, and had a look, sometimes a few words, for my sister and me, at my aunt's tea-table, while Mr Whishaw took no more notice of us than of the chairs. Mr Smyth was a great lover of tea; he had a seal with a teapot and "Vert" engraved on it. My aunt always took care to provide him with some fine green tea, which he prepared himself. My aunt writes to a friend:—

"Pray get your readers to make you acquainted with Mr Smyth's 'Lectures on Modern History,' in two volumes. It is a very interesting and agreeable work, and succeeds beyond either his own or his friends' expectation. The sentiments are always excellent,—the style, to my taste, very good; it is very easy and even colloquial in general, but from this level course it rises sometimes to high animation and even splendid eloquence. He has been very



diligent and meritorious in the discharge of his duty as a professor, not satisfying himself with once preparing a course of lectures and repeating them year after year, but continually following up the course of time, and taking up and illustrating new portions of his almost boundless field. It is a great delight to find so much *new* merit in an old and excellent friend, and I never in my life enjoyed more satisfaction in thanking an author for a copy of his work.

"Mr Smyth drank tea with me last night, quite well, gay, and happy, as he has a right to be in the merited success of his excellent volumes."


Mr Whishaw was a short, stout man, with a cork leg, very lame, and with a rather surly manner. Except for his Whig politics he seemed like the description of Dr Johnson. He was intimate at Holland House, and full of anecdotes and interesting talk.

Of Joanna Baillie, the friend of my family for fifty years, I cannot give a better account than by transcribing part of an account written by Lucy Aikin after her beloved friend's death:—

Joanna  
Baillie.


"I was a young girl when I first met her at Mrs Barbauld's, to whom she had become known through her residence at Hampstead, her attendance on Mr B.'s ministry, and her connection with the Denman family. Her genius had shrouded itself under so thick a veil of silent reserve, that its existence seems scarcely to have been suspected beyond the domestic circle when the 'Plays on the Passions' burst on the world. . . .

Of Joanna no one dreamt on the occasion. She and her sister—I well remember the scene—arrived on a morning call at Mrs Barbauld's. She immediately introduced the topic of the anonymous tragedies, and gave utterance to her admiration with that generous delight in kindred genius which distinguished her. But not even the sudden delight of such praise could seduce our Scottish damsel into self-betrayal. The faithful sister rushed forwards to bear the brunt, while the unsuspected author lay snug in the asylum of her taciturnity. Repression of all emotion seems to have been the constant lesson of her Presbyterian home. Her sister once told me that their father was an excellent parent ; when she had been bitten by a dog thought to be mad, he had sucked the wound at the risk of his own life,—but he had never given her a kiss. Joanna once spoke of her yearning to be caressed. She would sometimes venture to clasp her little arms about her mother's knees, who would seem to chide her—'but I knew she liked it.' Be that as it may, the first thing which drew upon Joanna the admiring notice of Hampstead society, was her devoted attention to her mother, blind as well as aged, whom she attended day and night. But this task of duty came to an end, and the secret of her authorship having transpired, she was no longer privileged to sit in the shade. Latterly her discourse flowed freely, and it had too much of her own nature not to be ever welcome and delightful ; but of all the writers I have ever known, she spoke the least of



books. It was not from them, but from real life and the aspects of rural nature, that her imagination drew the materials in which it worked. . . . 'I could not read well,' she once said to me, 'till nine years old.' 'O Joanna,' cried her sister, 'not till eleven.' 'I made my father melancholy breakfasts,' she continued, 'for I used to say my lesson to him then, and I always cried over it.' And yet they used to say 'This girl is not stupid; she is handy at her needle, and understands common matters well enough.' 'I rambled over the heaths, and plashed in the brook most of the day.' At school she was the ringleader of all pranks and frolics, and used to entertain her companions with an endless string of stories of her own invention. She was also addicted to clambering on the roof to act her scenes alone.

"At the time of her childhood, her father, afterwards Divinity Professor in Glasgow, was minister of a rural parish, and his children ran about with his humble parishioners barefoot like the rest. In summer she would confess her longing to pad in the grass free from the incumbrance of hose and shoes, and I have known her throw away some eloquence to persuade English parents to allow their children to partake in so *healthful* an indulgence. She had, in fact, a full share of national predilections, . . . but it appeared practical in her to love Scotch things and persons more, without loving the English less. Yet in many respects she never Anglicised in the least. Whether she and her sister took pains to keep



up their native dialect I know not ; but it is certain that on their revisiting Glasgow twenty years after they had left it, their friends were surprised to find them speaking with a broader accent than themselves. If, however, any one had expected to detect in her the slightest want of good manners or social refinement, he would speedily have found his error. Joanna Baillie was an innate gentlewoman, and over the meekness of her disposition and the simplicity of her demeanour, there presided a genuine dignity capable of repelling arrogance and striking unworthiness with '*blank awe*.' Her reserve had much of caution, but nothing of cowardice ; she had perfect self-possession, and courage enough to say whatever she judged right, regardless of any one's opinion. But such was her indulgence, and the truly Christian humility of her spirit, that she was practically only too tolerant of impertinent intrusions. She was the only person towards whom fifty years of close intimacy, while they deepened my affection, wore away nothing of my reverence.

"So little was she disposed for display that it was seldom that her genius shone out in conversation ; but I have seen her eye kindle while her language rose to the full height of some 'great argument.' Her deep knowledge of the human heart would at times break loose from the habitual caution, and I have then thought that if she were not the most candid and benevolent, she would be the most formidable of observers. Nothing escaped her, and there was much

humour in her quiet touches. The acuteness and originality of her mind displayed itself most in her off-hand remarks. Now and then, when on my way to relate to her something which might amuse or interest her, I have thought, what will be her comment? No, that I cannot anticipate, but I am sure it will be the best thing said on the occasion, and such it never failed to be. No one would ever have taken her for a married woman. An innocent and maiden grace hovered over her to the end of her old age. It was one of her peculiar charms, and often brought to my mind the line addressed to the vowed Isabella, 'I hold you for a thing enskied and saintly.' If there ever were human creature 'pure in the last recesses of the soul,' it was surely this meek, this pious, this noble-minded and nobly gifted woman, who after attaining her ninetieth year, carried with her to the grave the love, the reverence, the regrets of all who had enjoyed the privilege of her society."

I can add nothing to my aunt's description of dear Mrs Joanna. My recollection of her and her sister is of them in extreme old age, charming even in the eyes of a young girl. Soon after the publication of the last volume of the Plays, Mrs Joanna's friends got up a reading of one of them at the "Holly Bush," then the only public room at Hampstead. Mrs Bartley, the wife of the actor, and who had been on the stage herself, was asked to read. She performed her task with much effect and feeling. The large room was quite full; the two dear old ladies, dressed alike in

grey silk, with pretty lace caps, came quietly in with the rest, Mrs Joanna walking meekly behind her elder sister. Her friends understood her feelings too well to distress her by any public recognition of her presence, though she accepted their congratulations at the end with evident pleasure and simple dignity; and we all felt it to have been a most interesting evening.

She told us in her quiet droll way that some of her old friends in Scotland were shocked at the line of writing she had taken to, and said she had seen in a letter from one—"Have ye heard that Jocky Baillie has taken to the *public line*?"

She died before her devoted elder sister, who lived to the great age of one hundred years, retaining her faculties (except her memory) to the last, though she was in bed for the last year or two.

Their grave is next to that of my aunt's in Hampstead Churchyard.

## CHAPTER XVII.

Sydney Smith—Rajah Ram Mohun Roy.

AFTER the death of Sydney Smith, with whom my aunt was well acquainted, she wrote to a friend :—Sydney Smith.

“ I suppose you have not failed to read the collected works of Mr Sydney Smith. I have been exceedingly pleased with the only part which was not before familiar to me as his—the articles from the *Edinburgh Review*. These gratified me negatively as well as positively. It was a real satisfaction to find that this truly amiable man was guiltless of those barbarous critiques which broke the spirits of often meritorious writers, and called forth so much deserved indignation from their friends and from all right feeling people. Jeffrey and Brougham seem to have been the great offenders in this matter, while Sydney Smith everywhere appears as the sincerely powerful advocate of every good cause—the suggestor often of the most decided improvements in legislation and in public instruction which have since been carried into effect.

“ His light and sparkling wit, instead of supplying the want of solid sense and vigorous thought, is no more than the vehicle in which they are best conveyed. He is, in the whole force of the term, a laughing philosopher, and the courage which he showed in

thus recommending salutary reforms, and in pouring ridicule, never forgotten or forgiven, on the stupid or the interested opposers of them in times most hostile to all such attempts, is above all praise."

Rajah Ram  
Mohun  
Roy.

We were so fortunate as to see a good deal of the Hindu reformer, Rajah Ram Mohun Roy, who came to England in the year 1831.

He took a house near us in Bedford Square, and we were introduced to him by mutual friends. He was a striking figure, with his fine dark face and beautiful Eastern dress, and was a perfect gentleman in manners and feeling. He spent an evening with us at my aunt's, of which she gave Dr Channing an account :—

"He came to my house with Dr Boott, partly for the purpose of meeting Mrs Joanna Baillie, and discussing with her the Arian tenets of her book (she had just published an account of her belief in these opinions).

"He mentioned Sanscrit as the mother tongue of the Greek, and said that the expressions of the New Testament, most perplexing to an European, were familiar to an Oriental acquainted with this language; and that to such a person the texts which are thought to support the doctrine of the pre-existence bear quite another sense. She was a little alarmed at the erudition of her antagonist, and slipped out at last by telling him that his interpretations were too subtle for an unlearned person like herself. We then got him upon other subjects—Hindu laws, especially those affecting women. He spoke of polygamy as a crime



and a misery. 'If you see a man dull, unhappy, pleased with nothing, he has two wives.' Said it was punishable by their laws, but the Mussulman example had corrupted Hindus; *they* were cruel to women, the Hindus were forbidden all cruelty. Speaking of the abolition of widow burning by Lord William Bentinck, he fervently exclaimed, 'May God *load* him with blessings!'

"His feelings for women, still more his admiration of the mental accomplishments of English ladies, won our hearts. He mentioned his own mother in such terms, which convinced us of the falsehood of the shocking tale that she burned herself for his apostasy."

I often met him in London after this evening; at large parties, and even balls, where he would converse on subjects that seemed rather unsuitable to the place—the Trinity, and other sacred things, which were occupying his own thoughts. At a party at a friend of ours, Captain Mauleverer, who had known the Rajah in India, and was much attached to him, we, however, overheard one of the guests, an Indian officer of rank, say angrily, "What is that *black fellow* doing here?" A shocking speech to those who loved and honoured him so much!

Ram Mohun Roy unfortunately died in about a year after he came to England, lamented by all to whom his noble and amiable character was known.

He left his adopted son, a boy about twelve years old, to be educated in England, under the care of the Rev. Samuel Wood.

We saw a good deal of this boy, who was glad to come to our cheerful house, as Mr Wood lived alone with him in lodgings, and was a cold stiff man, very unfit for the charge of a wild impulsive creature, quite unlike anything English. He wore his native dress, in which he looked very handsome and striking. I made a drawing of him, which was engraved. One day, being allowed to walk alone in a low part of the town, his valuable Indian shawl was plucked from his shoulders, and was never recovered.

He was a clever, interesting boy, and we were all very fond of him. A party of our young friends once got up part of Othello, in which he acted the principal part with great effect, dress and complexion requiring no alteration. He returned to India when his education was finished, and I believe obtained a civil appointment.

## CONCLUSION.

THE seventy years I have recorded seem to me to have brought about more social changes than surely any other seventy years in the memory of man. In my youth, to begin with, the power of steam had not been discovered. No railroads, no steamers, and no steam-engines for various trades and manufactures. Gas was unknown till I was about fifteen. I remember staying at an aunt's in the country, and the whole household driving for hours about the town near them on the first night of the gas illumination. There were no police ; the protection of the inhabitants of London and other towns depended on decrepit watchmen, hardly caricatured by Dogberry and Verges, who, on a shower of rain, would always be found in their sentry boxes in the streets ; they went about with lanterns, and cried out the hours to tell the thieves of their whereabouts. The power of electricity was little known, and of course there were no telegraphs, that supreme wonder of modern times. No cheap postage—letters paid for by the receiver according to distance. Chloroform, that blessed invention, unknown. India rubber, with all its various uses, unheard of.

Dr Priestley indeed wrote to Mrs Barbauld of a curious substance which would erase pencil marks, which he promised to show her, but it did not seem followed up. There were no omnibuses in London, or cabs; indeed I never saw any carriage, public or private, with *one* horse, except a *gig*. There were no means of striking a light except by a *tinder-box*, which I am told is now considered a valuable curiosity. Thousands of other, now quite common things, were unknown. How did we live without them? Quite as comfortably, I think; indeed, making all allowance for the difference between the feelings of crabbed age and youth, life seemed easier and happier fifty or sixty years ago. There was less of pushing and anxiety. If a man had several sons, he left the choice of a profession to their own inclinations, or he discovered their talents, and provided for them accordingly, with little fear of their success if they were steady and clever; now they must take what they can get, thankful often for unpaid work, or perhaps forced to emigrate to distant or unhealthy places. Every way of life, even in the fine arts, is crowded to suffocation, and talents, which would formerly have commanded fame and fortune, are quite overlooked. The poor young people also are overworked, to the injury of their health and sometimes to loss of life. It is heartbreaking, too, to see in the neighbourhood of London the ruthless destruction of every lovely spot; trees cut down, lanes and fields covered with dreary bricks and mortar.

King James' heart would be filled with despair and anger could he see his London now.

It is time to end these rambling sketches. The names I have recorded belong to the dead, among whom I must soon take my own place. I have tried to give some idea of the patience and courage of my elder relations during the evil times in which their early days were passed, and who, when at last the good times came round, received *not* their reward, beyond the approval of their consciences. Would that my pen were more worthy of its subjects!

My daughter's sketch of Gilbert Wakefield will close this volume; it was compiled from papers and letters in my possession.

I would humbly give thanks to the Disposer of all events for the dear ones left to me, but the "friends of my youth, where are they?"

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GILBERT WAKEFIELD.

"Amongst the now almost forgotten minor martyrs to the political intolerance of the eighteenth century, was the Rev. Gilbert Wakefield; a man of great

attainments, original mind, active benevolence, and unbending conscientiousness, though we must allow him also to have been of vehement and acrimonious prejudices, and singularly imprudent in many of his efforts to benefit mankind.

“He did himself less than justice in his writings; but his private life was spotlessly pure, pre-eminently true, and great in qualities which only those who knew him intimately and enjoyed his friendship had the opportunity of knowing. He conveys a disagreeable impression of himself in his autobiography (a work now almost unknown), but this impression those who loved him declare to be quite a false one, due only to his unfortunate manner of expressing himself, and a want of moderation and judgment.

“That stern obedience to conscience which, in the eighteenth century, brought him to Dorchester Gaol, would certainly, in the fifteenth, have gained him a martyr's death; since he never hesitated for a moment to sacrifice what he held most dear to his intense and ardent conviction of truth.

“That his character had a tender side is plain from the testimony not only of his children, who always spoke of him with the deepest love and reverence, but also from that of friends who knew the real man. Miss Lucy Aikin, whose family was connected with his by marriage, wrote of him to Mr Bright of Liverpool:—

“‘He was one who, whatever might be the errors of

his judgment, exhibited in evil times and under trials indeed severe, some of the highest and rarest of human virtues. The time is not yet come for writing such "A History of England during the French Revolution" as may teach those who live in happier days justly to estimate the struggles, the trials, the moral martyrdoms of that brave minority to whom is due that England we may be proud to own and blest to live in.'

"What were these 'struggles, trials, and moral martyrdoms?'

"Nothing, perhaps, very terrible; for, even of his imprisonment, Gilbert Wakefield wrote to his daughter Anne 'that his circumstances amounted more to un-comfortableness than misery; ' still, even were this the case, we may wonder whether there are many, in our easier days, who would have the courage of their opinions to the point of enduring two years of imprisonment, rather than keep the expression of those opinions for the select few who can allow that there is room in the world for the widest angle of divergence.

"Punishment for unpopular forms of belief has become an anachronism, though society still reserves its peculiar penalties for those who run counter to its cherished standards of the orthodox and becoming.

"Gilbert Wakefield is little known now; a fact which is largely due, I think, to the very uninviting nature of his memoir. He wrote a volume of autobiography, published in 1772. Another volume, with an appendix, edited by his friend and executor, Mr

Rutt, appeared in 1804. The earlier one ends at that period of his life which was most remarkable; and is, I must admit, an awkwardly written though not uninteresting volume. It is full of anecdotes and quaint and learned remarks. The second volume of the life is far more interesting, as it contains a full account of his imprisonment, and also gives, through the medium of an enthusiastic and sympathetic friend, a far more pleasing picture of Gilbert Wakefield's character than he conveys himself. The autobiography is written in words of Johnsonian length, nearly every sentence is italicised and emphasised by capital letters, so that a page of it presents a curious appearance. His style is exaggerated and sometimes absurd. He begins his narrative in characteristic words:—

“I was *introduced into this planet* on February 22, 1756, in the parsonage house of St Nicholas, in Nottingham, of which church my father was rector.’

“His mother's family had been settled in Nottingham for generations, and was derived from both the Russels and the Cokes. His father was seventeen years rector of Nottingham and nine years vicar of Kingston, where he died, much beloved by his parishioners, in 1776.

“Gilbert Wakefield, like many other learned people of the last century, was a remarkably precocious child. He gives an account of his early years in quaintly solemn diction.

“‘From my earliest infancy I was endowed with affections unusually composed, with a disposition



grave and serious. I was inspired from the first with a most ardent desire of knowledge, such as I believe hath never been surpassed in any breast, nor for a moment impaired in mine. . . . At the age of *three* years, I could spell the longest words, say my catechism without hesitation, and read the gospels with fluency.' Before he was five he went, he says, 'to a writing school, and about the age of seven I was initiated in the Latin language at the free school of Nottingham.' In 1772 he obtained a scholarship in Jesus College, Cambridge. Here he devoted himself to classical studies. The college lectures in Algebra and Logic he declared to be 'odious to him beyond conception;' but he pursued his studies with unremitting zeal for two years, except when, as he oddly expressed it, 'a strange fastidiousness' seized him, generally in the spring, when he was so 'enamoured of rambling in the open air, of cricket, and of fishing,' that he was unable to read a single page. This seems a natural phase in the character of a lad of eighteen. Only so solemn and learned a young scholar would have thought there was anything 'strange' in an occasional disinclination for study and a desire for open air in fine spring weather. In his third year he gained the prize for the best Latin ode, and he was elected fellow in 1776, at the age of twenty. Through this year he worked hard at classical and theological studies, 'meddling neither with controversialists nor commentators, but endeavouring to obtain complete mastery of the phraseology of both Scriptures.'

"He was second wrangler, second medallist, and second in the Bachelor's Prize both years, obtaining what he calls 'an inferior allotment on every occasion.' It would have satisfied a less ambitious scholar.

"In March 1778, he was ordained deacon at the age of twenty-two. Even then, he says, he was so little satisfied with the requisition of subscription that he afterwards regarded this acquiescence as the 'most disingenuous action of his life.'

"He declares that he reconciled himself to it by that 'stale, shameless sophistry which is usually employed on such occasions ; for instance, that so young a man could not be competent to form a judgment on such points.' He goes on in his vehement way to exclaim against 'the abominable wickedness of requiring an unfeigned *consent* and *assent* to such a miscellany of propositions, some of which are unutterably stupid, beyond the sottishness of even *Hottentot* Divinity !'

"This invective gives a good idea of Gilbert Wakefield's violent, aggressive, and exaggerated manner of expressing his hatred for anything in the nature of falsehood or hypocrisy. His devotion to Truth was so ardent, that, in defence of her he injured the justice of his cause and alienated more moderate thinkers. He considered the conduct of those who professed to be teachers in the Church of Christ as in direct defiance of the express prohibitions of Jesus Christ, and quotes the words of St Paul, 'Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from Iniquity.'

"He was curate at Stockport to a Mr Watson, a

hard student and a very lively, well-informed man. He behaved in a friendly, hospitable way to Wakefield, and treated him with far more consideration than curates usually received in those days. While curate there, he relates an anecdote of a woman old enough to be his grandmother, who was confirmed for the *fourth* time, 'because she found herself strengthened so much by the bishop's hands!'

"Gilbert Wakefield married the niece of his rector. The great-grandfather and grandmother of this lady afforded an extraordinary example of conjugal happiness lasting over a period of *seventy-five* years. They died nearly at the same time, she at the age of ninety-eight, he at a hundred and seven! He was vigorous to the last, and hunted a short time before his death. Both died in full possession of their faculties.

"Mr Wakefield was most fortunate in his choice of a wife, and was the tenderest husband imaginable. In domestic life all his asperities gave place to the gentlest kindness and affection.

"In August 1778, Gilbert Wakefield left Stockport, and applied for the post of head-master of Brewood School. He inquired in his letter to the trustees whether it would be necessary for him again to subscribe the Thirty-nine Articles, which he had determined not to do, though the nature of his convictions was not yet fixed enough to justify his relinquishing his profession. As he found that this step would be expected of him, he gave up the appointment, and he soon after took a curacy in Liverpool. He says

that he had never lived anywhere where the clergy were treated with less notice, and he only made a few friends, amongst whom were Mr William Rathbone and Dr Gregory, afterwards chaplain to Wakefield's antagonist, the Bishop of Llandaff.

"The curate could not keep the growing heterodoxy of his opinions from appearing in his sermons, which led to his rector, Mr Maddock, mildly expostulating with him. Whereupon the irrepressibly truthful and pugnacious curate asked him to answer one question, 'as he expected to render an account to the Great Umpire of the Universe.'

" 'Tell me plainly, Mr Maddock,' he said; 'did you ever read the Scriptures, with the express view of inquiring into the doctrine of a Trinity, *early in life*, and before your *preferment*, or your *prospects* of preferment, might contribute to influence your judgment, and made it *convenient* for you to acquiesce?'

" 'Why, then,' says he, 'I must honestly own I never did.' The rector seems to have borne the searching questions of his subordinate very good naturedly.

"Gilbert Wakefield studied the Scriptures incessantly, and every day his objections to the creed of his forefathers increased; so that he finally determined to quit the Church as soon as an opportunity offered, though his attachment to his profession was so great that he could not bear the thought of taking up any other.

"While he was at Liverpool he began to interest


himself in public affairs, which were just then in a state of the greatest chaos and confusion all over Europe. The French war was raging, and hundreds of prisoners were brought in by the privateers. Gilbert Wakefield visited them while in confinement, and was mortified and ashamed to hear their complaints of ill-usage and scanty allowance of food. He wrote anonymously to the Mayor, and was the means of getting their condition improved.

“The indignation which he felt against the bad practices of the privateers was expressed in one of his sermons in so ‘hypertragical’ a manner, as he says, that a lady in the congregation was so deeply agitated by it as to induce her husband to sell his share in one of these vessels.

“Liverpool was at this time the headquarters of the African slave trade. Incredible horrors took place in those privateering ships. Gilbert Wakefield states that it came out on trial that on one occasion, when the captain of a ship of this sort had an opportunity of saving his crew and cargo by taking refuge in a French island, but had no chance of making any profit by his traffic in human life, he threw overboard, one by one, as they were brought out from their dungeon below, *one hundred and thirty* of these miserable slaves! Another Liverpool captain, living when Gilbert Wakefield wrote, himself related that a female slave having fretted herself to a degree injurious to health about the infant she had with her, this monster of cruelty snatched the child from her arms, knocked

its head against the side of the ship, and threw it into the sea ! No wonder that the honest blood of such a man as Gilbert Wakefield boiled at such iniquities, enacted under his eyes ! No wonder that humane men all over England revolted against authorities and powers which allowed such horrors to be possible ! Better far to be too violent, too rash, in denouncing abuses, as he was, than to stand on one side and let wickedness go on. At this time the House of Commons refused to listen to the requisitions from all classes of the people to put an end to this traffic.

“In 1779, having determined not to proceed with his degree, he removed, with his wife, to the once famous Warrington Academy, where he was classical tutor. This institution, distinguished by such names as Enfield, Priestley, Price, and Aikin, had been founded twenty-two years before, in order to provide a course of liberal education for the sons of Dissenters. It survived four more years after Mr Wakefield's appointment. John Aikin, D.D., the father of the other John Aikin, and of Mrs Barbauld, was then the divinity tutor. He was a man for whom Mr Wakefield had an unbounded admiration, and is described by all who knew him as of almost perfect life. In 1783 the academy was dissolved, and Gilbert Wakefield removed, with his family, to a village near Nottingham, where he tried to get pupils ; but only succeeded in finding one. The following year he removed to Nottingham itself, where he was more successful in finding them on handsome terms. Amongst them



about this time, he had Robert Hibbert, afterwards well known as the founder of the Hibbert Trust, which has provided the scholarships and lectures known by this name. This pupil had always a great enthusiasm for his master, which took the practical form of sending him, while in Dorchester Gaol, the sum of £1000.

"Mr Wakefield left Nottingham in 1790, and took a post as classical tutor in Hackney College. Wherever he was, whatever he might be employed upon, it was simply impossible to Gilbert Wakefield's ardent, restless, and disputatious mind to keep from controversy. He wrote constantly against the Established Church, and against everything in which he thought he saw abuses and hypocrisy. If the consequences of his writings had been penal, he would have braved them. But for his great want of moderation and tact, he would have made an admirable reformer. He had zeal enough to set the world on fire. He was a 'political fanatic,' as Crabb Robinson called him, and rushed into print on every occasion when his feelings of opposition were roused.

"He attended all the capital punishments while in Nottingham, though it sickened the kind-hearted and humane man, for the purpose of making observations on their results, and came to the just conclusion that the penal laws, as then enacted, were among the 'enormous sins for which the Governor of the universe will visit us.' One death he witnessed was that of an unhappy lad who had robbed a traveller of a few

shillings, under the influence of a hardened accomplice.

"Gilbert Wakefield lived at Hackney for seven years, and brought out various works during this time, one famous in its day—the 'Silva Critica.' In 1794 he published a pamphlet called 'The Spirit of Christianity compared with the Spirit of the Times in Great Britain.' He also wrote an answer to Paine's 'Age of Reason.' He had sympathised strongly with many of Thomas Paine's former writings, but as strongly disagreed with this present work.

"Mr Wakefield was, at this time, what was then called a Unitarian Christian, declaring himself 'a genuine votary of a crucified Saviour, who looks for a "better country," and feels himself impelled to a bold and open profession of the practical principles of Love, Peace, and Liberty to the whole human race.'

"Early in 1798 he published the pamphlet which brought upon him, at last, the penalty which he had seemed almost to court. It was an answer to a political pamphlet written by Dr Watson, Bishop of Llandaff, the object of which was to defend the measures of Mr Pitt and his colleagues. Gilbert Wakefield's paper was written in a single day, and is an exceedingly rash and violent affair. He asserted in it that the poor and labouring classes in England would lose nothing by a foreign invasion. The Bishop took it in a very moderate and unresentful manner; but those statesmen who were strongly condemned by him determined to prosecute the author



and the publisher of the pamphlet. This prosecution involved first a Mr Cuthill, then Mr Johnson, the Unitarian bookseller, and, lastly, Mr Wakefield himself. The author wrote at once to the Attorney-General, acknowledging the pamphlet, and begging to be answerable alone for it. He defrayed all the expenses of the suit for Mr Cuthill—a sum amounting to his whole yearly income.

“Twelve months of anxiety passed between the arrest of Cuthill and Mr Wakefield’s trial, which took place at the Court of King’s Bench, in February 1799. He undertook his own defence, which he drew up in writing—an eloquent and fervent address, but one not calculated to serve his cause. He was the last man capable of a calm and judicious defence, and he brought in a number of irrelevant and irritating topics. The jury delivered a verdict of guilty without leaving the court. Bail was offered and accepted. He was brought up for judgment a few weeks later, when he took the opportunity of addressing the Court in a speech prepared for the occasion, in which he held forth on various subjects, moral and political, condemning capital punishment, even for murder. One is hardly surprised to hear that considerable impatience was shown, especially among the *junior* counsel. Instead of judgment being at once pronounced, as he expected, he was conveyed to King’s Bench Prison, to be brought up the following term. For the use of a ‘meanly-furnished room’ for less than eight weeks the marshal of the prison demanded

the sum of £50 and a 'copy of Mr Wakefield's Lucretius, bound in morocco.' While in the prison he was visited by many friends, amongst whom were the Duke of Bedford, Lord Holland, and Mr Fox. In May he was brought before Mr Justice Grove to receive sentence.

"The terms employed by the judge were of unjustifiable severity. He spoke of Gilbert Wakefield, whose whole life had been spent in the pursuit of truth and in efforts to help and benefit mankind, as 'a man of artifice affecting to enforce peace and goodwill for pitiful purposes, who could not possibly be sincere in his profession.'

"The sentence, declared to be a very lenient one, was imprisonment in Dorchester Gaol for two years, and that he should give security for his good behaviour for the term of five years, himself in the sum of £500, with two sureties at £250 each.

"Wakefield kept up bravely till the 'great trial' of having to tell his wife and daughters, who felt the sentence acutely. It was not so much the imprisonment as the separation from his friends, that made the penalty so hard to bear. The money difficulty, which would have been very great considering Wakefield's slender means and the drain of the law expenses, was happily got over by the generosity of his friends and sympathisers, who, without his knowledge, soon raised the sum of £1500. In the end, double this was obtained, which was enough to provide for Mrs Wakefield and his children a com-

fortable residence near the gaol while he was confined there.

“He was taken to Dorchester Gaol in June 1799, in the custody of the tipstaff. His eldest daughter Anne accompanied him. His brother had procured him the best accommodation to be got in the gaol, on agreeing with the gaoler (who would now be called the governor) to pay £100 per annum, Mr Wakefield taking his meals at his table. As he seldom tasted animal food, was most sparing in his diet, and was to provide himself with wine, the terms were high enough. He had the misfortune, owing to unavoidable circumstances, to offend the gaoler and his son, and suffered greatly all through his imprisonment from the petty malice of the man, whom he describes as a ‘gloomy and malignant biped.’ He was denied the privilege of seeing his family oftener than three or four times a week from twelve till three, and, in many ways, was made to suffer from the small tyrannies which did not allow him the ‘dignity of suffering.’

“He felt the separation from his family deeply. He had delighted in teaching his daughters Greek and Latin, and was a most fond and indulgent father. His daughter Anne, afterwards Mrs Charles Aikin, then a lovely girl of seventeen, in consequence of the persecution of the gaoler’s son, who wished to marry her, had to leave Dorchester, and was removed to Eton, near Liverpool, by her kind friends, Dr Crompton and his family, who sent their ‘great coach’ all

the way to fetch her. Her father constantly wrote her interesting and loving letters while he was in prison, which make him appear in a most favourable light. Indeed, the noblest part of his nature came now fully into play; he left controversy alone, and, whatever his words might be, his actions were always benevolent and generous. His behaviour to the other prisoners in Dorchester Gaol was touchingly kind and humane, reminding one of that of the immortal Dr Primrose under similar circumstances. He took great pains to inquire into individual cases, and now and then was able to redress some of their wrongs by drawing up petitions and by appealing to influential friends in their behalf. Nor did he neglect simple and humble ways of showing courtesy and kindness. 'During the high price of bread, he bought large quantities of mackerel, which he distributed amongst the prisoners; he also, occasionally, gave them money for tea. To such of them as were desirous of employing themselves in reading on Sundays, and after their work, he gave Testaments. In the winters of 1799 and 1800, the weather was remarkably severe, and he supplied them with potatoes, tobacco, and other things, of which they stood in need, as their portion of bread was small and the quality very inferior. He likewise contributed to the comfort of the debtors by giving them his advice in their affairs, and sending newspapers to them daily; he wrote letters for them to their friends, and was the means of procuring the liberation of several. He gave them also money for

coals and other necessities. After their release, many of them sent him trifling presents to show their gratitude for his kindness.'

"While he was in confinement he took upon himself the painful task—especially painful to his tender heart—and fulfilled it with true Christian devotion, of ministering to the unfortunate creatures who were condemned to death for stealing, according to the iniquitous laws of that day. After the Spring Assizes of 1801 thirteen prisoners were sentenced to death, four of whom had to await their execution in Dorchester Gaol, three of them never having been in prison before. Gilbert Wakefield wrote to his daughter:— 'They are now undergoing the previous torture of cold, solitary cells, heavy irons, with bread and water to continue existence rather than to sustain life.'

"He obtained leave to visit these poor wretches, and exerted himself, since he could do nothing to mitigate their penalty, to prepare their minds to bear their doom with courage and resignation. He actually succeeded in this, though he found them in a state of despondency beyond description when he first visited them. 'It was universally admitted that no men ever met death with more tranquil resignation. They welcomed the summons to execution with a readiness, even cheerfulness, that commanded the admiration of the beholders, whose lamentations and sorrow, mine among the rest, formed a striking contrast to their steadiness, silence, and magnanimity.'


"While he was helping others to bear their burdens,

he had his own private griefs to add to what he felt for these condemned prisoners. A few days after their execution, he lost a little boy who had been an invalid for some time. Besides this sorrow, his daily life was made bitter by the small persecutions of the gaoler, against which he had no redress. Any complaint was met by a threat that he should be removed to the common prison among the felons, where he would have to sleep in a stone cell without fireplace or window, with an open grating which admitted the rain.

"There is no doubt that the constant and harassing trials of this life, as well as the confinement acting upon a sensitive nature, brought on a state of health which led to his premature death.

"He was released on Friday, May 29th, 1801, 'after an abode of two years in a room in which the sun never shone, and within walls whose height almost excluded his rays from the area of the prison.'

"And what was the crime for which this penalty was imposed? A few rash and outspoken words, hastily launched on the world in the hope of redressing wrong and injustice. He was treated as a criminal by judge, jury, and gaoler; a man whose moral character was spotless, and whose whole life was freely devoted to the service of his fellows, who valued his own worldly advantage as nothing, and only lived to benefit the oppressed and the suffering. In the cause of what he felt to be truth he did, in effect, lay down his life, for he only left prison to die.



"His own release did not make him forget those who were more unhappy than himself, and whom he left behind him. He made an appeal to the superintending magistrate for the prisoners, stating with his usual fearless frankness all those grievances and abuses which he had witnessed himself, and of which he believed the magistrates to be ignorant. The prisoners had confided them to him of their own accord, for he had never tried to stir up discontent amongst them. He was unsuccessful in this application, as might have been expected, since he had no witnesses but the prisoners themselves, and against him there was the testimony of the gaoler, his son, and many leading men in the county. But, though he did not succeed in this instance, he certainly was the means of drawing attention to the treatment of prisoners, and probably helped to bring about in time a better condition of things.

"He intended to draw up an account of Dorchester Gaol, in which he should dwell upon the defects of the system and the treatment of the prisoners, which he had had opportunities of observing personally, as the magistrates never had, since all accounts were taken from the gaoler on trust. 'A man might be on his books as disorderly, locked up for days, shut up in a cell without fire, because, perhaps, he had found fault with his provisions.' In this solitary confinement the unfortunate inmate of the cold, desolate cell was left for fifteen or sixteen hours in winter in total darkness. The prisoners, even before trial, were

loaded with heavy irons, under which they could scarcely move, at the discretion of the gaoler. The same spirit which prompted Howard to reform the prisons inspired Gilbert Wakefield: while one is remembered, the other ought not to be quite forgotten.

"Soon after leaving Dorchester, Mr Wakefield returned to Hackney, and took up his old life there, much as before, till the following August, when the shadow of the last change approached. His disease proved to be typhus fever, and made rapid advances, so that in a few days he lost full consciousness, though he had gleams of intelligence and even cheerfulness, in one of which, as his doctor writes, 'He fixed his eyes on his wife with a smile and look of tenderness that I shall never forget.' His daughter, Anne, who had been so long separated from her beloved and most loving father, only met him again to see him die. After about a week, his disease took the last form of such a fever, and he died on September 9th, 1801, in the forty-sixth year of his age, leaving a widow and six children.

"Into these forty-five years Gilbert Wakefield had compressed a great deal of life. He had worked hard and produced much; his was an eager nature and a strong individuality; idleness or inaction was impossible to him. At the age of twenty he had published his first book, and had written altogether a very great amount. Many of his works were famous in their day, and went through many editions; amongst the best known were the 'Silva Critica,'



'The Spirit of Christianity,' his 'Reply to Paine's Age of Reason,' and the 'Reply to the Bishop of Llandaff.' He published more than fifty works of different kinds, besides many pamphlets. He was an excellent classical scholar and an admirable instructor in what he knew himself.

"His domestic life was beautifully gentle and affectionate ; his friendship warm and constant. He was, in an age of cock-fighting, bull-baiting, and almost universal indifference to the sufferings of animals, so humane that he gave up fishing, of which he was exceedingly fond, as well as shooting, because every form of cruelty was abhorrent to him. He tried to persuade his friend, Charles James Fox, to do the same, but was unsuccessful in this attempt. He was ascetic in his personal habits, as many men of his type were in that day, and probably weakened his constitution by excessive abstemiousness ; tea was his only weakness. He never employed any but gentle means with his scholars, and he was always opposed to harsh punishments of every kind.

"He tried to follow Him whom he always acknowledged (while the world called him a heretic) as his Master and Saviour.

"His religious opinions were in some respects peculiar; he did not entirely join any sect, though he was generally classed with the Unitarians of his day. He believed firmly in Revelation, trying to draw inspiration direct from the Scriptures without the intervention of any Church or Authority. He disagreed

1

with the advocates of what was called 'Natural Religion,' declaring that Revelation was the only warrant for belief in resurrection. His own faith was strong in this hope.

"The following is the conclusion of a will he made in Dorchester Gaol:—

"I wish to be buried with as little expense and ceremony as is consistent with decorum, and hope that my family and friends will not lament my death, which is a motive of joy and not of grief, under an expectation of immortality by the Christian covenant, but rather profit by their fond remembrance of me in avoiding my faults and imitating my virtues.

"I come quickly, and my reward is with me. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. Amen.'

"This man, 'take him for all in all,' deserves to be remembered with honour. He lived in difficult times; he endured persecution and calumny; he never flinched from duty; he never resisted the voice of conscience or the call of pity. In an age of bigotry, tyranny, and oppression, he kept true to the English watchword of Freedom. He did something to earn for this generation the blessings of liberty of thought and respect for individual conviction.

"Dr Parr said of him after his death:—

"'Whatsoever his hand found to do, he did it with all his might: he knew the value of every fleeting moment; and he improved every talent which a gracious Providence entrusted to him.'"

MARY E. MARTIN.

# INDEX.

- Abney, Lady, 16.  
 Aikin, John, D.D., 11, 26, 106, 111.  
 Aikin, wife of above, 11, 24, 111.  
 Aikin, Dr, 4-12, 16-24, 32-34, 68, 82, 145.  
 Aikin, Dr, wife of, 17, 34-36, 55, 58, 103.  
 Aikin, Arthur, 1-3, 27, 88, 92-97, 134, 138.  
 Aikin, Chas. Rochemont, 2, 3, 64, 122, 132, 133, 148.  
 Aikin, C. R., wife, 53, 61, 62, 76, 136, 188.  
 Aikin, Edmund, 17, 27, 38.  
 Aikin, Lucy, 6, 18, 26, 35, 52, 56, 68, 70, 75, 76, 77, 81, 94, 99, 117, 136, 141.  
 Alderson, Dr, 73.  
 Altham, 8.  
 Annesley Family, 6-9.  
 D'Arblay, Mme., 1, 96.  
 Baillie, Joanna, 65, 68, 145, 164-168.  
 Barbauld, Mr, 3, 44-46, 68, 117-119, 121.  
 Barbauld, Mrs, 14, 16, 17, 20, 26, 28, 35, 38, 41-50, 51, 52, 63, 95, 102, 134.  
 Baring, 140.  
 Bengel, Miss, 13, 140.  
 Bentinck, Lord Wm., 171.  
 Bright, H. A., 110, 113.  
 Briggs, 154.  
 Brougham, Lord, 149.  
 Bunyan, John, 9, 10.  
 Burney, Miss, 123.  
 Callcot, Lady, 153.  
 Campbell, 39.  
 Carr Family, 66, 70.  
 Channing, Dr, 56, 161.  
 Chapone, Mrs, 124.  
 Charlotte, Princess, 89.  
 Coleridge, 77.  
 Corke, Lady, 75.  
 Cornwall Family, 37, 38.  
 Crabbe, 157.  
 Cranworth, Lady, 70.  
 Cumberland, Duke and Duchess of, 90, 91.  
 Cuthill, 187.  
 Daer, Lord, 66.  
 Darwin, 60.  
 De Camp, Miss Victoire, 154.  
 Denman, Lord, 148, 149.  
 Devonshire, Duchess of, 124.  
 D'Israeli, 40.  
 Doddridge, Dr, 10, 11, 28, 29.  
 Dyer, George, 98-101.  
 Edgeworth, Miss, 95, 104, 132.  
 Edgeworth Family, 95, 96, 97.  
 Enfield, Dr, 71, 111, 184.  
 Erskine, Lord, 137, 160.  
 Everett, Wm., 161.  
 Fanshaw, Catherine, 160.  
 Flaxman, 152.  
 Follen, Mrs, 161.  
 Fox, C. J., 7, 122, 137, 195.  
 Friend, 42, 43.  
 Godwin, Wm., 80.  
 Grisi, 156.

- Hamond, Elton, 48.  
 Hamond, Miss, 49.  
 Heygate, Mrs, 77.  
 Hibbert, Robert, 185.  
 Hoare Family, 157.  
 Hogg, 74, 75.  
 Howard, John, 57-59.
- Inchbald, Mrs, 143, 145.  
 Irving, Edward, 152.
- Jameson, Mrs, 150.  
 Jenning Family, 4, 5, 10, 27.  
 Johnson, Dr, 122.  
 Johnson (Publisher), 132, 187.
- Kean, 154.  
 Kembles, 154.  
 Kenyon, Mr, 151.  
 Kinder, Mrs, 38.
- Lamb, Charles, 44, 75.  
 Lind, Jenny, 154.  
 Liston, 154.  
 Longmans, 157.  
 Loyd, 14.
- Mackintosh, Sir James, 21, 72, 129.  
 Macready, Wm., 154.  
 Mallet, 159.  
 Malthus, 159.  
 Mario, 154.  
 Martineau, Harriet, 158.  
 Martineau Family, 73.  
 Mendelsshon, Felix, 73.  
 Montagu, Mrs, 114, 126, 132.  
 Montgomery, James, 81.  
 Moore, T., 79.  
 More, Hannah, 50, 125, 127-129.
- Nelson, Lord, 79, 80.  
 Nightingale, Miss, 13.
- Opie, Mr, 74.  
 Opie, Mrs, 73, 74, 79.
- Parr, Dr, 20, 196.  
 Price, Dr, 184.  
 Priestley, Dr, 54, 55, 111, 174, 184.
- Ram Mohun Roy, Rajah, 170-171.  
 Reid, Mrs, 149, 150.  
 Robinson, Crabbe, 51, 52, 141, 151.  
 Rogers, Samuel, 65, 79, 140.  
 Rogers, Henry, 139.  
 Roscoe, Mr, 20, 32, 34.
- Scott, Sir W., 69.  
 Sharpe, Miss, 138, 139.  
 Shelley, Mrs, 81.  
 Smirke, R. A., 152.  
 Smith, Sydney, 169.  
 Smyth, Professor, 162, 163.  
 Southey, 76.  
 Sussex, Duke of, 93.
- Taylor, Wm., 23, 71, 72.  
 Taylor, Dr, 111, 130.
- Verney, Lady, 13.
- Wakefield, Gilbert, 111, 175-192.  
 Wakefield, Mrs, 101, 181.  
 Wakefield Family, 88, 89, 90.  
 Watson, Bishop of Llandaff, 181, 185.  
 Wedgewood, Josiah, 60, 61.  
 Wesley, Miss, 142.  
 Whishaw, Mr, 162, 163.  
 Wilberforce, 13, 127.  
 William IV., 90, 91.  
 Wingate Family, 6-12.  
 Wood, Rev. S., 171, 172.  
 Wolstonecraft, Mary, 20, 81.  
 Wordsworth, 53, 78.

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## CONTENTS.

---

BOOKS OF TRAVEL	...	...	...	...	..	...
HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY	...	...	...	...	...	...
STANESBY'S ILLUMINATED BOOKS	...	...	...	...	...	...
USEFUL KNOWLEDGE AND ENTERTAINING ANECDOTE	6,					
HANDBOOKS FOR THE HOUSEHOLD	...	...	...	...	...	...
FICTION, &c.	...	...	...	...	...	... 9
POETRY AND BELLES-LETTRES	...	...	...	...	...	11
BIRTHDAY AND ANNIVERSARY BOOKS	...	...	...	...	...	12
DEVOTIONAL AND RELIGIOUS BOOKS	...	13,	14,	15,	16,	
AMERICAN SERMONS AND THEOLOGICAL BOOKS	...	...	...	...	...	18
EDUCATIONAL BOOKS	...	...	...	...	...	...
Darnell's Copy Books.						
History and Geography.						
Geographical Readers.						
Grammar, &c.						
Arithmetic, Algebra and Geometry.						
Elementary French and German.						
Needlework Manuals and Appliances.						
MISCELLANEOUS BOOKS...	...	...	...	...	...	28, 29,
WORKS FOR DISTRIBUTION	...	...	...	...	...	30,

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